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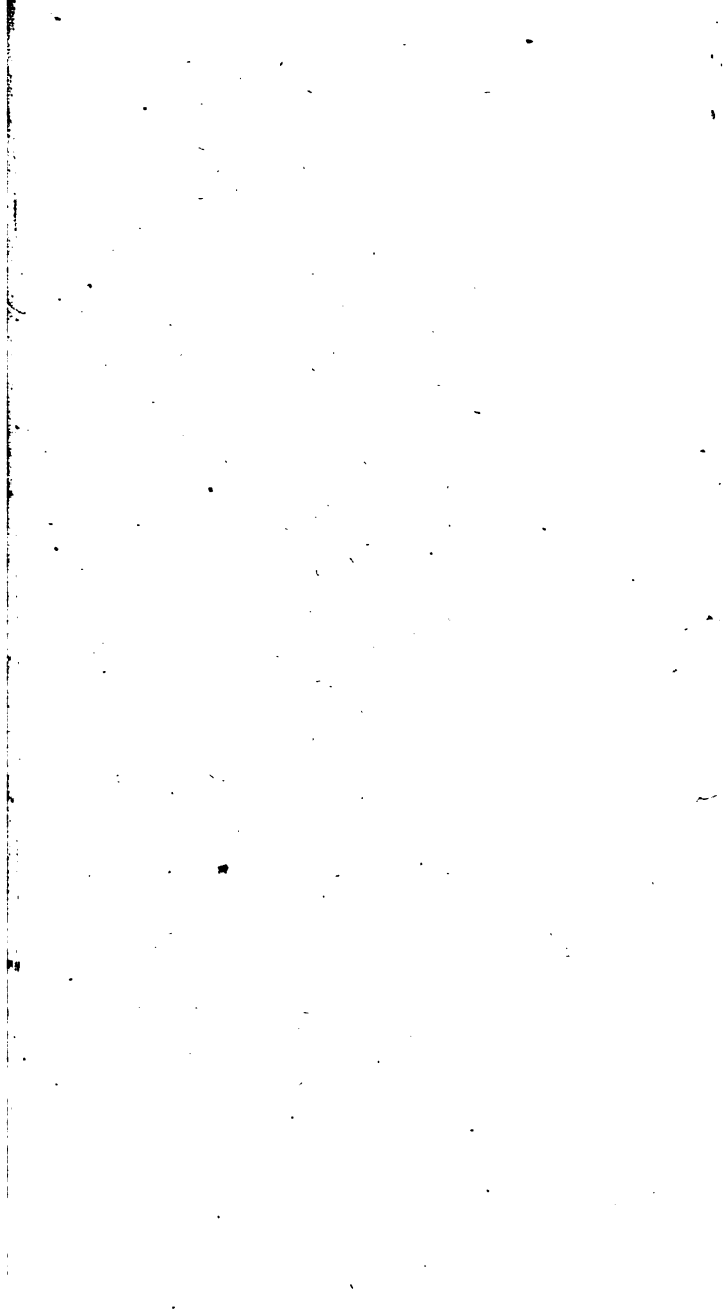
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IN MEMORY OF BESSIE HINCKS
BORN APRIL 11 1865 · DIED JULY 5 1885







Bell's
BRITISH THEATRE;
COMEDIES.



~ L O N D O N ~

*Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange in the
 Strand and C. Etherington at York Dec^r. 1st 1776.*

B E L L's

BRITISH THEATRE,

Consisting of the most esteemed

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOLUME THE ELEVENTH.

Being the Fifth VOLUME of COMEDIES.

CONTAINING

The REFUSAL, by COLLEY CIBBER.

The WAY OF THE WORLD, by W. CONGREVE. ✓

AMPHITRYON, altered from DRYDEN by Dr.
HAWKESWORTH.

The DRUMMER, by Mr. ADDISON.

The RELAPSE, by Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter Exchange*,
in the *Strand*.

MDCCLXXVII.

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Robert del.

Engraved by J. Smith, Theatrical Print.

Theatrical Print.

M. MACKLIN, in the Character of S. GILBERT WRANGLE
Nay, I have them from all Nations, here's one now,
from an Irish Relation of my own.

LONDON.

S L;



L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*:

MDCCLXXVII.

Mr. MACKLIN, in the Character of S^r GILBERT WRANGLE.
Nay, I have them from all Nations, here's one now,
from an Irish Relation of my own.

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
REFUSAL;

OR, THE
LADIES PHILOSOPHY.
A COMEDY,

As written by COLLEY CIBBER.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. WILD, Prompter.



L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVII.



P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by the Author.

Gallants! behold before your eyes the wight,
 Whose actions stand accountable to-night,
 For all your dividends of profit or delight.
 New plays resemble bubbles, we must own,
 But their intrinsic value soon is known,
 There's no imposing pleasure on a town.
 And when they fail, count o'er his pains and trouble,
 His doubts, his fears, the poet is a bubble.
 As heroes by the tragic muse are sung;
 So to the comic, knaves and fools belong:
 Follies, to-night, of various kinds we paint,
 One, in a female philosophic saint,
 That wou'd by learning nature's laws repeal,
 Warm all her sex's bosoms to rebel,
 And only with Platonic raptures swell.
 Long she resists the proper use of beauty,
 But flesh and blood reduce the dame to duty.
 A coxcomb too of modern stamp we show;
 A wit—but impudent—a South-Sea beau.
 Nay, more—our muses' fire (but, pray, protect her)
 Roasts, to your taste, a whole South-Sea director.
 But let none think we bring him here in spite,
 For all their actions, sure, will bear the light;
 Besides, he's painted here in height of power,
 Long ere we laid such ruin at his door:
 When he was leav'd, like a statesman, by the town,
 And thought his heap'd-up millions all his own.
 No, no; stock's always at a thousand here,
 He'll almost honest on the stage appear.
 Such is our fare, to feed the mind our aim,
 But poets stand, like warriors, in their fame;
 One ill day's work brings all their past to shame.
 Thus having tasted of your former favour,
 The chance seems now for deeper stakes than ever.
 As after runs of luck, we're most accurst,
 To lose our winnings, than have lost at first;
 A first stake lost has often sav'd from ruin,
 But on one cast to lose the tout—is hard undoing.
 But be it as it may—the dye is thrown,
 Fear now were folly—Pass the Rubicon.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Covent-Garden.

<i>Sir Gilbert Wrangle,</i>	—	—	Mr. Macklin.
<i>Frankly,</i>	—	—	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Granger,</i>	—	—	Mr. Mahon.
<i>Wittling,</i>	—	—	Mr. Lee Lewes.
<i>Cook,</i>	—	—	Mr. Dunstall.

W O M E N.

<i>Lady Wrangle,</i>	—	—	Mrs. Green.
<i>Sophronia,</i>	—	—	Mrs. Lessingham.
<i>Maid,</i>	—	—	Miss Ambrose.
<i>Charlotte,</i>	—	—	Miss Macklin.

Servants, &c.

THE.

T H E R E F U S A L.

* * The lines distinguished by inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are the additions of the Theatre.

A C T . I.

The SCENE, Westminster-Hall.

Frankly and Granger meeting.

FRANKLY.

IS it possible!

Gran. Frankly!

Fran. Dear Granger! I did not expect you these ten days; how came you to be so much better than your word?

Gran. Why, to tell you the truth, because I began to think London better than Paris.

Fran. That's strange: but you never think like other people.

Gran. I am more apt to speak what I think, than other people: though, I confess, Paris has its charms; but to me they are like those of a coquette, gay and gaudy; they serve to amuse with, but a man would not choose to be married to them. In short, I am to pass my days in Old England, and am therefore resolved not to have an ill opinion of it.

Fran. These settled thoughts, Ned, make me hope, that if ever you should marry, you will be as partial to the woman you intend to pass your days with.

Gran. Faith, I think every man's a fool that is not: but it's very odd; you see, the grossest fools have ge-

‘ nerally sense enough to be fond of a fine house, or a fine horse, when they have bought them : they can see the value of them, at least ; and why a poor wife should not have as fair play for one’s inclination, I can see no reason, but downright ill nature or stupidity.

‘ *Fran.* What do you think of avarice ? when people purchase wives, as they do other goods, only because they are a pennyworth : then too, a woman has a fine time on’t.

‘ *Gran.* Ay, but that will never be the case of my wife : when I marry, I’ll do it with the same convenient views as a man would set up his coach ; because his estate will bear it, it’s easy, and keeps him out of dirty company.

‘ *Fran.* But, what ! would you have a wife have no more charms than a chariot ?

‘ *Gran.* Ah, friend, if I can but pass as many easy hours at home with one, as abroad in t’other, I will take my chance for her works of supererogation ; and I believe at worst, should be upon a par with the happiness of most husbands about town.

‘ *Fran.* But at this rate, you would marry before you are in love.

‘ *Gran.* Why not ? Do you think happiness is entailed upon marrying the woman you love ? No more than reward is upon public merit : it may give you a title to it indeed ; but you must depend upon other people’s virtue to find your account in either. For my part, I am not for building castles in the air ;’ when I marry, I expect no great matters ; none of your angels, a mortal woman will do my business, as you’ll find, when I tell you my choice. ‘ All I desire of a wife, is, that she will do as she is bid, and keep herself clean.’

Fran. ‘ Would you not have her a companion, tho’, as well as a bedfellow ?

‘ *Gran.* You mean, I suppose, a woman of sense.

‘ *Fran.* I should not think it amiss for a man of sense.

‘ *Gran.* Nor I ; but, ’s’death ! where shall I get her ? In short, I am tired with the search, and will ev’n take up, with one, as nature has made her, handsome, and only a fool of her own making.

‘ *Fran.*

Fran. Was ever so desperate an indifference? I am impatient till I know her.

Gran. Even the sage and haughty prude, Sophronia.

Fran. Sophronia! 'I hope you don't take her for a fool, Sir: why, she thinks she has more sense than all her sex together.

Gran. 'You don't tell me that as a proof of her wit, I presume, Sir.

Fran. No: but I think your humour's a little extraordinary, that can resolve to marry the woman you laugh at.

Gran. It's at least, a sign I am in no great danger of her laughing at me, Tom; the case of many a prettier fellow. But I take Sophronia to be only a fool of parts, that is however capable of thinking right; and a man must be nice indeed, that turns up his nose at a woman who has no worse imperfection, than setting too great value upon her understanding.' I grant it she is half mad with her learning and philosophy: what then? so are most of our great men, when they get a little too much on't. Nay, she is so rapt in the pride of her imaginary knowledge, that she almost forgets she is a woman, and thinks all offers of love to her person a dishonour to the dignity of her soul; but all this does not discourage me: she may fancy herself as wise as she pleases; but unless I fail in my measures, I think I shall have hard luck, if I don't make that fine flesh and blood of hers, as troublesome as my own in a fortnight.

Fran. You must have better luck than I had then; I was her fool for above five months together, and did not come ill-recommended to the family; but could make no more impression than upon a vestal virgin; and yet how a man of your cool reflexion, can think of attempting her, I have no notion.

Gran. Psha! I laugh at all her airs: a woman of a general insensibility, is only one that has never been rightly attacked.

Fran. Are you then really resolved to pursue her?

Gran. Why not? Is not she a fine creature? Has not she parts? Would not half her knowledge, equally divided, make fifty coquettes all women of sense? Is

not

not her beauty natural, her person lovely, her mien majestic? — Then such a constitution —

Fran. Nay, she has a wholesome look, I grant you : but then her prudery, and Platonic principles, are insupportable.

Gran. Now to me they are more diverting, than all the levity of a coquette : Oh, the noble conflicts between nature and a proud understanding, make our triumphs so infinitely above those petty conquests — Besides, are not you philosopher enough to know, my friend, that a body continent holds most of the thing contained ? 'Tis not your wasting current, but reservoirs, that make the fountain play ; not the prodigal's, but the miser's chest that holds the treasure. No, no, take my word, your prude has thrice the latent fire of a coquette. Your prude's flask hermetically sealed, all's right within, depend upon't ; but your coquette's a mere bottle of plague-water, that's open to every body.

Fran. Well, Sir, since you seem so heartily in earnest, and, I see, are not to be disgusted at a little female frailty : I think I ought in honour to let you into a little more of her. You must know then, this marble-hearted lady, who could not bear my addresses to herself, has, notwithstanding, flesh and blood enough to be confoundedly uneasy, that I now pay them to her sister.

Gran. I am glad to hear it. Pr'ythee, let me know all ; for 'tis upon these sort of weaknesses that I am to strengthen my hopes.

Fran. You know, I writ you word, that I thought the safest way to convey my real passion for her sister Charlotte, would be to drop my cold pretensions to Sophronia insensibly ; upon which account I rather heightened my respect to her ; but as, you know, 'tis harder to disguise a real inclination, than to dissemble one we have not ; Sophronia, it seems, has so far suspected the cheat, that, since your absence, she has broke into a thousand little impatiences at my new happiness with Charlotte.

Gran. Good.

Fran. But the jest is, she can't yet bring down her vanity to believe I am in earnest with Charlotte neither ; but

THE REFUSAL.

9

but really fancies my addressees there are all grimace ; the mere malice of a rejected lover, to give her scorn a jealousy.

Gran. Admirable ! ‘ but I hope you are sure of this.

‘ *Fran.* ’Twas but yesterday she gave me a proof of it.

‘ *Gran.* Pray, let’s hear.

‘ *Fran.* Why, as Charlotte and I were whispering at one end of a room, while we thought her wrapt up in one of Horace’s odes at the other, of a sudden I observed her come sailing up to me, with an insulting smile, as who should say—I laugh at all these shallow arts—— then turned short, and looking over her shoulder, cried aloud,——*Ab, miser !*

‘ *Quantū laboras in Charybdi !*

‘ *Gran.* *Digne puer meliore flamma*——Ah! methinks I see the imperious hussy in profile, waving her snowy neck into a thousand lovely attitudes of scorn and triumph! Oh, the dear vanity!’ Well, when all’s said, the coxcomb’s vastly handsome.

‘ *Fran.* ’Egad, thou art the oddest fellow in the world, to be thus capable of diverting yourself with your mistress’s jealousy of another man.

‘ *Gran.* Psha! Thou’rt too refined a lover; I am glad of any occasion that proves her more a woman than she imagines.

‘ *Fran.* But pray, Sir, upon what foot did you stand with her before you went to France?

‘ *Gran.* Oh, I never pretended to more than a Platonic passion; I saw, at first view, she was inaccessible by love.

‘ *Fran.* Yet, since you were resolved to pursue her, how came you to think of rambling to Paris?

‘ *Gran.* Why, the last time I saw her, she grew so fastidiously jealous of my regarding her more as a woman, than an intellectual being, that my patience was half tired; and having, at that time, an appointment with some idle company to make a trip to Paris, I slyly took that occasion, and told her, if I threw myself into a voluntary banishment from her person, I hoped she would then be convinced; I had no other views of happiness, than what her letters might, even in absence, as well gratify, from the charms of her understanding.

‘ *Fran.*

Fran. Most solemnly impudent.

Gran. In short, her vanity was so blind to the banter, that she insisted upon my going, and made me a conditional promise of answering all my letters; in which I have flattered her romantic folly to that degree, that in her last, she confesses an entire satisfaction in the Innocent Dignity of my inclinations (as she styles it) and therefore thinks herself bound in gratitude to recall me from exile: which gracious boon (being heartily tired at Paris) I am now arrived to accept of.

Fran. The merriest amour that ever was! Well, and, *Frank*, why don't you visit her?

Gran. Oh! I do all things by rule—hot till she has dined; for our great English philosopher, my Lord Bacon, tells you, that then the mind is generally most ductile.

Fran. Wisely considered.

Gran. Besides, I want to have a little talk first with the old gentleman her father.

Fran. Sir Gilbert! If I don't mistake, yonder he comes.

Gran. Where, pr'ythee?

Fran. There, by the bookseller's; don't you see him, with an odd crowd after him?

Gran. Oh! now I have him—he's loaded with papers, like a solicitor.

Fran. Sir, he is, at this time, a man of the first consequence, and receives more petitions every hour, than the court of chancery in a whole term.

Gran. What! is he lord treasurer?

Fran. A much more considerable person, I can assure you; he is a South Sea director, Sir.

Gran. Oh, I cry you mercy! and those about him, I presume, are bowing for subscriptions.

Fran. That's their business, you may be sure; but see, at last he has broke from them. *Let's*

Gran. No: there's one has got him by the sleeve again.

Fran. What if we should stand off, and observe a little?

Gran. With all my heart.

Sir Gibb. [To a Man at the door.] Pr'ythee, be quiet, fellow! I tell you I'll send the Duke an answer to-morrow morning.

[Within.]

[*Wubin.*] It's very well, Sir—

Sir Gilbert speaks, entering with a great parcel of open letters in his hand, and others stuffing his pockets.

Sir Gibb. Very well ! aye, so it is, if he gets it then—
Why ! what ! these people of quality, sure, think they do you a favour when they ask one—Huh, let him come for it himself ! I am sure I was forced to do so at his house, when I came for my own, and could not get it either—and he expects I should give him two thousand pounds only for sending a footman to me. Why ! what ! Does his Grace think I don't know which side my bread's buttered on ? Let's see ! who are these from ? [*Reads to himself.*]

Gran. The old gentleman's no blind admirer of a man of quality, I see.

Fran. Oh, Sir ! he has lately taken up a mortal aversion to any man that has a better title than himself.

Gran. How so, pray ?

Fran. As he grows rich, he grows proud ; and among friends, had lately a mind to be made a lord himself ; but applying to the wrong person, it seems he was disappointed ; and ever since piques himself upon despising any nobleman who is not as rich as himself.

Gran. Hah ! the right plebeian spirit of Old England : but I think he's counted an honest man.

Fran. Umph ! Yes, well enough—a good sort of a mercantile conscience : he is punctual in bargains, and expects the same from others ; he will neither steal nor cheat, unless he thinks he has the protection of the law : then indeed, as most thriving men do, he thinks honour and equity are chimerical notions.

Gran. That is, he bluntly professes what other people practise with more breeding—But let's accost him.

Fran. Stay a little.

Enter a Footman, with a Letter.

Sir Gibb. To me, friend !—What, will they never have done ?

Footm. Sir, my Lady Double-chin presents her service, and says she'll call for your honour's answer to-morrow morning.

Sir

Sir Gilb. Very well ; tell my Lady, I'll take care—
 ‘ [*Exit Footman.*] to be exactly out of the way when she comes.

Gran. Hah ! he'll keep that part of his word, I warrant him.

Sir Gilb. Let's see : the old story, I suppose— [*Reads.*]
 ‘ Um—um—yes, yes—only two thousand—Hah ! does the woman take me for a fool ? Does she think I don't know, that a two thousand subscription is worth two thousand guineas ? And because she is not worth above fourscore thousand already, she would have me give them to her for nothing. To a poor relation, she pretends, indeed ; as if she loved any body better than herself. A drum ! and a fiddle ! I'll grease none of your fat sows, not I.’—No, no ; get you into the negative pocket—Bless my eyes ! Mr. Granger !

Gran. Sir Gilbert, I am your most humble servant.

Sir Gilb. In troth, I am glad to see you in England again—Mr. Frankly, your humble servant.

Fran. Sir, your most obedient.

Sir Gilb. Well, how goes Mississippi, man ? What, do they bring their money by waggon loads to market still ? Hay ! ha, ha, ha !

Gran. Oh, all gone ! Good for nothing, Sir ! Your South Sea has brought it to waste paper.

Sir Gilb. Why, ay, han't we done glorious things here, ha ? We have found work for the coachmakers as well as they, boy.

Gran. Ah, Sir, in a little time we shall reduce those, who kept them there, to their original of riding behind them here.

Sir Gilb. Hah, huh ! you will have your joke still, I see—Well, you have not sold out, I hope.

Gran. Not I, faith, Sir ; the old five thousand lies snug as it was. I don't see where one can move it and mend it ; so e'en let it lie, and breed by itself.

Sir Gilb. You're right, you're right—hark you—keep it—the thing will do more still, boy.

Gran. Sir, I am sure it's in hands that can make it do any thing.

Sir Gilb. Have you got any new subscriptions ?

Gran. You know, Sir, I have been absent ; and it is really

really now grown so valuable a favour, I have not the confidence to ask it.

Sir Gibb. Psha! pr'ythee, never talk of that, man.

Gran. If I thought you were not full, Sir——

Sir Gibb. Why, if I were as full as a bumper, Sir, I'll put my friends in, let who will run over for it.

Fran. Sir Gilbert always doubles his favours by his manner of doing them.

Sir Gibb. Frankly, you are down for five thousand pounds already, and you may depend upon every shilling of it—Let me see—what have I done with my list?——Granger has a good estate, and had an eye upon my eldest daughter before he went to France. I must have him in; it may chance to bring the matter to bear. [*Aside.*]

Gran. Where did you get all these letters, Sir Gilbert?

Sir Gibb. Why, ay, this is the trade every morning; all for subscriptions. Nay, they are special stuff—Here, pr'ythee, read that.

Fran. Who is it from, Sir?

Sir Gibb. Oh, a North-Briton! a bloody, squabbling fellow, who owes me a thousand pounds for difference, and that's his way of paying me. Read it.

Gran. [*Reading.*] "Wuns, Sir, de ye no tack me for a man of honour! Ye need no fend to my ludging so often for year pimping thousand pound. An ye'll be but civil a bit, I'll order the bearer, my brocker, to mack up year balance; an if ye wull but gee yoursel the trouble to put his name intull your own list for a thousand subscription, he'll pay ye aw down upo' the nail: but an ye wunna do this smaw jubb, the deel dom me an ye e'er see a groat from me, as long as my name is

George Blunderbuss."

Fran. What can you do with such a fellow, Sir?

Sir Gibb. Do with him! why, I'll let him have it, and get my money. I had better do that, than be obliged to fight for it, or give it to the lawyers.

Fran. Nay, that's true too.

Sir Gibb. Here's another, now; from one of my wife's hopeful relations; an extravagant puppy, that has rattled a gilt chariot to pieces before it was paid for. But he'll die in jail.

Fran. [*Reading.*]—"Dear knight."—I see he is familiar.

Sir Gilb. Nay, it's all of a piece.

Fran. [*Reading.*] "Not to mince the matter; yesterday, at Marybone, they had me all bob as a Robin. In short, being out of my money, I was forced to come the caster, and tumbled for five hundred, dead: besides which, I owe Crop, the lender, a brace; and if I have a single Simon to pay him, rot me. But the queer coll promises to advance me t'other three, and bring me home, provided you will let him sneak into your list for a cool thousand. You know it's a debt of honour in me, and will cost you nothing.

Yours in haste,

Robert Rattle."

Fran. The stile is extraordinary.

Gran. And his motives irresistible.

Sir Gilb. Nay, I have them from all nations; here's one now from an Irish relation of my own.

Fran. Oh! pray, let's see.

Sir Gilb. There.

[*Frankly reads.*]

"Loving cousin, and my dear life.

"There is only my brother Patrick, and dat is two of us; and because we would have a great respect for our relations, we are come post from Tipperary, with a loving design to put both our families upon one anoder. And though we have no acquaintance with your brave daughters, we saw them yesterday at the cathedral church, and find they vil sharve us vel enough. And to shew our sincere affections, we vil taak dem vidout never a penny of money; only, as a small token of shivility upon your side, we desire the faavour of both of us each ten thousand in this same new subscription. And because, in our haste, some of our cloaths and bills of exchange were forgot, prydee be so grateful as to send us two score pounds, to put us into some worship for the mean time. So dis was all from, my dear life,

Your humble sarvant,

And loving relation,

Owen Mac Ogle."

Fran. A very modest epistle, truly!

Sir Gilb. Oh, here's my list.—Now, Mr. Granger, we'll see what we can do for you. Hold, here are some people

people that have no business here, I am sure—ay, here is Dr. Bullanbear, one thousand—Why, ay, I was forced to put him down to get rid of him. The man has no conscience. Don't I know he's in every court-list under a sham name? Indeed, Domine Doctor, you can't be here. [*Scratches him out.*] Then here's another favourite of my wife's too; Signor Caponi da Capo—two thousand—What, because he can get as much for a song, does he think to have it for whistling too?—Huh, huh, huh! not I, troth; I am not for sending our money into popish countries. [*Blots him out.*]

Fran. Rightly considered, Sir.

Sir Gibb. Let's see who's next——*Sir James Baker,*

Knt. one thousand.

Gran. Who's he, Sir?

Sir Gibb. Oh, a very ingenious person! he's well known at court; he must stand; besides, I believe we shall employ him in our Spanish trade—Oh! here we can you spare one, I believe—*Sir Isaac Bickerstaff,*
Knt. one thousand.

Fran. What, the fam'd censor of Great Britain?

Sir Gibb. No, no, he was a very honest, pleasant fellow; this is only a relation, a mere whimsical, that will draw nobody's way but his own, and is always wiser than his betters. I don't understand that sort of wisdom, that's for doing good to every body but himself. Let those list him that like him; he shall ride in no troop of mine, oddestheartlikins! [*Blots him.*]

Gran. How he damps them with a dash, like a pro-scribing triumvir!

Sir Gibb. Let's see.—I would fain have another for you—Oh, here! William Penkethman, one thousand. Ha, a very pretty fellow, truly! What, give a thousand pounds to a player! why, it's enough to turn his brain: we shall have him grow proud, and quit the stage upon it. No, no, keep him poor, and let him mind his business; if the puppy leaves off playing the fool, he's undone. No, no, I won't hurt the stage; my wife loves plays, and whenever she is there, I am sure of three hours quiet at home—[*Blots, &c.*—] Let's see; one, three, four, five, say, just Franky's sum—Here's five thousand for you, Mr. Granger, with a wet finger.

B. 2

Gran.

Gran. Sir, I shall ever be in your debt.

Sir Gilb. Pooh ! you owe me nothing.

Fran. You have the happiness of this life, Sir Gilbert, the power of obliging all about you.

Sir Gilb. Oh, Mr. Frankly, money won't do every thing ! I am uneasy at home for all this.

Fran. Is that possible, Sir, while you have so fine a lady ?

Sir Gilb. Ay, ay, you are her favourite, and have learning enough to understand her ; but she is too wise and too wilful for me.

Fran. Oh, Sir ! learning's a fine accomplishment in a fine lady.

Sir Gilb. Ay, it's no matter for that, she's a great plague to me. Not but my lord bishop, her uncle, was a mighty good man ; she lived all along with him ; I took her upon his word ; 'twas he made her a scholar ; I thought her a miracle ; before I had her, I used to go and hear her talk Latin with him an hour together ; and there I—I—I played the fool—I was wrong, I was wrong—I should not have married again—and yet, I was so fond of her parts, I begged him to give my eldest daughter the same fine education ; and so he did—but, to tell you the truth, I believe both their heads are turned.

Gran. A good husband, Sir, would set your daughter right, I warrant you.

Sir G. He must come out of the clouds, then ; for she thinks no mortal man can deserve her. What think you, Mr. Frankly, you had soon enough of her ?

Fran. I think still, she may deserve any mortal man, Sir.

Gran. I can't boast of my merit, Sir Gilbert ; but I wish you would give me leave to take my chance with her.

Sir Gilb. Will you dine with me ?

Gran. Sir, you shall not ask me twice.

Sir Gilb. And you, Mr. Frankly ?

Fran. Thank you, Sir ; I have had the honour of my Lady's invitation before I came out.

Sir Gilb. Oh, then, pray don't fail ; for when you are there, she is always in humour.

Gran. I hope, Sir, we shall have the happiness of the young lady's company too.

Sir

Sir Gib. Ay, ay, after dinner I'll talk with you.

Fran. Not forgetting your favourite, Charlotte, Sir.

Sir Gib. Look you, Mr. Frankly, I understand you; you have a mind to my daughter Charlotte, and I have often told you I have no exceptions to you; and therefore you may well wonder why I yet scruple my consent.

Fran. You have a right to refuse it, no doubt, Sir; but I hope you can't blame me for asking it.

Sir Gib. In troth, I don't; and I wish you had it, with all my heart. But so it is—there's no comfort, sure, in this life; for, though, by this glorious state of our stocks, I have raised my poor single plumb to a pomgrate, yet if they had not risen quite so high, you and I, Mr. Frankly, might possibly have been both happier men than we are.

Fran. How so, Sir?

Sir Gib. Why, at the price it now is, I am under contract to give one of the greatest coxcombs upon earth the refusal of marrying which of my daughters he pleases.

Gran. Hey-day! What, is marriage a bubble too?

[*Aside.*]

Sir Gib. Nay, and am bound in honour even to speak a good word for him. You know young Witling.

Fran. I could have guess'd your coxcomb, Sir; but I hope he has not yet named the lady.

Sir Gib. Not directly; but I guess his inclinations, and expect every hour to have him make his call upon my consent according to form.

Fran. Is this possible?

Gran. Sir, if he should happen to name Sophronia, will you give me leave to drub him out of his contract?

Sir Gib. By no means; credit's a nice point, and people won't suppose that would be done without my connivance: beside, I believe Sophronia's in no danger. But because one can be sure of nothing, gentlemen, I demand both your words of honour, that, for my sake, you will neither of you use any acts of hostility.

Fran. Sir, in this case, you have a right to command us.

Sir Gib. Your hands upon't.

Fran. And our words of honour.

Sir Gib. I am satisfied.—If we can find a way to out-

wit him, so; if not—Odso! here he comes—I beg your pardon, gentlemen; but I won't be in his way, till I cannot help it. Hum, hum! [Exit Sir Gilb.]

Gran. A very odd circumstance.

Fran. I am afraid there's something in it; and begin to think, now, my friend, Witling, (in his raillery yesterday with Charlotte) knew what he said himself, tho' he did not care whether any body else did.

Gran. Sure it cannot be real! I always took Witling for a beggar.

Fran. So he was, or very near it, some months ago; but since fortune has been playing her tricks here, she has rewarded his merit, it seems, with about an hundred thousand pounds out of Change-alley.

Gran. Nay, then he may be dangerous indeed.

Fran. I long to know the bottom of it.

Gran. That you can't fail of; for you know he is vain and familiar—and here he comes.

Enter Witling.

Wit. Ha, my little Granger! how dost thou do, child? Where the devil hast thou been this age? What's the reason you never come among us? Frankly, give me thy little finger, my dear.

Gran. Thou art a very impudent fellow, Witling.

Wit. Ay, it's no matter for that; thou art a pleasant one, I am sure; for thou always makest us laugh.

Fran. Us! What the devil dost thou mean by us, now?

Wit. Why, your pretty fellows, my dear; your *bons vivants*; your men of wit and taste, child.

Gran. I know very few of those; but I come from a country, Sir, where half the nation are just such pretty fellows as thou art.

Wit. Ha! that must be a pleasant place indeed! What, dost thou come from Paradise, child? Ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Don't you know he is just come from France, Sir?

Wit. You jest!

Gran. Why, ay—Now you see, Witling, your vanity has brought you into a fool's Paradise.

Wit. Oh, you pleasant cur! What, Paris, *quasi paradis*, or Paradise. Ha! I wish I had been with you: I am sure you would have thought it Paradise then.

Gran.

Gran. Nay, now he's fairly in.

Wit. 'Tis impossible to be out on't, Sir, in your company; wherever you are, it is always Paradise to me, depend upon't. Ha, ha!

Fran. Faith, Granger, there I think he came up with you.

Gran. Nay, since the rogue has money, we must, of course, allow him wit: but I think he is one of your good-natur'd ones; he does not only find the jest, but the laugh too.

Wit. Ay, and to hear thee talk, child, how is it possible to want either? Ha, ha!

Fran. Good again! Well said, Witling! Why, thou art as sharp to-day——

Wit. As a glover's needle, my dear; I always dart it into your leather heads with three edges, ha, ha!

Gran. Pr'ythee, Witling, does not thy assurance sometimes meet with a repatee that only lights upon the outside of thy head?

Wit. Oh, your servant, Sir! What, now your fire's gone, you would knock me down with the butt-end, would you? Ha! it's very well, Sir; I ha' done, Sir, I ha' done; I see it's a folly to draw bills upon a man that has no assets.

Gran. And to do it upon a man that has no cash of thine in his hands, is the impudence of a bankrupt.

Wit. Psha! a mere flash in the pan—'Well, well, it's all over'—Come, come, a truce, a truce; I have done; I beg pardon.

Gran. Why, thou vain rogue, thy good-nature has more impudence than thy wit. Dost thou suppose I can ever take any thing ill of thee.

Wit. Psha! fie! what dost thou talk, man? Why, I know thou canst not live without me. Dost think I don't know how to make allowances? Tho' if I have too much wit, and thou hast too little, how the devil can either of us help it, you know? Ha, ha!

Fran. Ha, ha! honest Witling is not to be put out of humour, I see.

Gran. No, faith, nor out of countenance——

Wit. Not I, faith, my friend; and a man of turn may say any thing to me—Not but I see by his humour,

‘mour, something has gone wrong—I hold six to four, now, thou hast been crabbed at Paris in the Mississippi.

‘*Gran.* Not I, faith, Sir; I would no more put my money into the stocks there, than my legs into the stocks here. There’s no getting home again, when you have a mind to it.

‘*Wit.* Ha! very good. But, pr’ythee, tell us; what, is the Quinquipois as pleasant as our Change-alley here?

‘*Gran.* Much the same comedy, Sir, where poor wise men are only spectators, and laugh to see fools make their fortune.

‘*Wit.* Ay, but there we differ, Sir; for there are men of wit too, that have made their fortunes among us, to my knowledge.

‘*Gran.* Very likely, Sir; when fools are flush of money, men of wit won’t be long without it. I hear you have been fortunate, Sir.

‘*Wit.* Humh—’Egad I don’t know whether he calls me a wit or a fool.

‘*Gran.* Oh, fie! every body knows you have a great deal of money.

‘*Fran.* And I don’t know any man pretends to more wit.

‘*Wit.* Nay, that’s true too: but—’Egad, I believe he has me.’

Gran. But, pr’ythee, *Witling*, how came a man of thy parts ever to think of raising thy fortune in Change-alley? How didst thou make all this money thou art master of?

Wit. Why, as other men of wit and parts often do, by having little or nothing to lose. I raised my fortune, Sir, as *Milo* lifted the bull, by sticking to it every day, when ’twas but a calf. I soufed them with premiums, child, and laid them on thick when the stock was low; and did it all from a brass nail, boy. In short, by being dirty once a day for a few months, taking a lodging at my broker’s, and rising at the same hour I used to go to bed at this end of the town. I have at last made up my accounts, and now wake every morning master of five-and-twenty hundred a year, *terra firma*; and pelt in my pocket: I have fun in my job, beside, child.

Gran.

Gran. And all this out of Change-alley ?

Wit. Every shilling, Sir ; all out of stocks, puts, bulls, rams, bears, and bubbles.

‘ *Gran.* These frolicks of Fortune do some justice at least ; they sufficiently mortify the proud and envious, that have not been the better for them.

‘ *Fran.* Oh, I know some are ready to burst even at the good fortune of their own relations !

‘ *Wit.* ‘Egad, and so do I ; there’s that furly put, my uncle, the counsellor, won’t pull off his hat to me now. A poor flaving cur, that is not worth above a thousand a year, and minds nothing but his business——

‘ *Fran.* And so is out of humour with you, because you have done that in a twelvemonth, that he has been drudging for these twenty years.

‘ *Wit.* But I intend to send him word, if he does not mend his manners now, I shall disinheret him.’

Gran. What are we to think of this, Frankly ? Is Fortune really in her wits, or is the world out of them ?

Fran. Much as it used to be ; she has only found a new channel for her tides of favour.

Wit. Pr’ythee, why dost not come into the Alley, and see us scramble for them ? If you have a mind to philosophize there, there’s work for your speculation ! ‘Egad, I never go there, but it puts me in mind of the poetical regions of death, where all mankind are upon a level : there you’ll see a duke dangling after a director ; here a peer and a ‘prentice haggling for an eighth ; there a Jew and a parson making up differences ; here a young woman of quality buying bears of a quaker ; and there an old one selling refusals to a lieutenant of grenadiers.

‘ *Frank.* What a medley of mortals has he jumbled together !’

‘ *Wit.* Oh, there’s no such fun in the universe !—— ‘Egad, there’s no getting away. Perish me, if I’ve had time to see my mistress, but of a Sunday, these three months.

Gran. Thy mistress ! What dost thou mean ? Thou speakest as if thou hadst but one.

Wit. Why, no more I have not, that I care a farthing for : I may perhaps have a stable of scrubs, to mount my
footmen

footmen, when I rattle into town, or so ; but this is a choice pad, child, that I design for my own riding.

Frank. Pr'ythee, who is she ?

Wit. I'll shew you, my dear — I think I have her here in my pocket.

Gran. What dost thou mean ?

Wit. Look you, I know you are my friends ; and therefore since I am sure it is in nobody's power to hurt me, I'll venture to trust you. — There ! that's whoo, child.

[*Shews a Paper.*

Fran. What's here ?

[*Reads.*

“ To Sir GILBERT WRANGLE.

“ Sir, according to your contract of the 11th of February last, I now make my election of your younger daughter, Mrs. Charlotte Wrangle ; and do hereby demand your consent, to be forthwith join'd to the said Charlotte in the sober state of matrimony. Witness my hand, &c.

WILLIAM WITLING.”

Fran. What a merry world do we live in !

Gran. This indeed is extraordinary.

Wit. I think so : I assure you, gentlemen, I take this to be a *coup de maître* of the whole Alley. This is a call now, that none of your thick-skulled calculators could ever have thought on.

Gran. Well, Sir, and does this contract secure the lady's fortune to you too ?

Wit. Oh, pox ! I knew that was all rvg before : he had settled three thousand a-piece upon them in the South Sea, when it was only about par, provided they married with his consent, which by this contract, you know, I have a right to. So there's another thirty thousand dead, my dear.

Fran. But pray, Sir, has not the lady herself a right of refusal, as well as you, all this while ?

Wit. A right ! aye, who doubts it ? Every woman has a right to be a fool, if she has a mind to it, that's certain : but Charlotte happens to be a girl of taste, my dear ; she is none of those fools that will stand in her own light, I can tell you.

Fran. Well, but do you expect she should blindly consent to your bargain ?

Wit. Blindly, no, child ; but dost thou imagine any citizen's

citizen's daughter can refuse a man of my figure and fortune, with her eyes open?

Gran. Impudent rogue!

[*Aside.*

Fran. Nay, I grant, your security's good, Sir: but I mean, you have still left her consent at large in the writing.

Wit. Her consent! Didst thou think I minded that, man? I knew, if the stock did but whip up, I should make no more of her than a poached egg. But to let you into the secret, my dear, I am secure of that already; for the slut's in love with me, and does not know it: ha, ha, ha!

Fran. How came you to know it then?

Wit. By her ridiculous pretending to hate me, child: for we never meet, but 'tis a mortal war, and never part, till one of us is rallied to death: ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Nay then, it must be a match; for, I see, you are resolved to take no answer.

Wit. Not I, faith! I know her play too well for that: in short, I am this very evening to attack her in form; and to shew you I am a man of skill, I intend to make my first breach from a battery of Italian music, in which I design to sing my own Io Pean, and enter the town in triumph.

Fran. You are not going to her now?

Wit. No, no, I must first go and give the governor my summons here. I must find out Sir Gilbert; he's hereabouts: I long to make him growl a little; for I know, he'll fire when he reads it, as if it were a *fiire facias* against the company's charter. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit Wit.*

Fran. When all's said, this fellow seems to feel his fortune more than most of the fools that have been lately taken into her favour.

Gran. 'Pox on him! I had rather have his constitution than his money.' Pr'ythee let's follow, and see how the old gentleman receives him.

Fran. No; excuse me; I can't rest till I see Charlotte: you know, my affairs now require attendance.

Gran. That's true; I beg you take no notice to Sophronia of my being in town; I have my reasons for it.

Fran. Very well; we shall meet at dinner. Adieu.

[*Exeunt severally.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, *Sir Gilbert's House.**Sophronia and Charlotte.*

CHARLOTTE.

HA, ha, ha!

Soph. Dear sister, don't be so boisterous in your mirth: you really over-power me! So much vociferation is insupportable.

Char. Well, well, I beg your pardon—but, you know laughing is the wholesomest thing in the world; and when one has a hearty occasion——

Soph. To be vulgar, you are resolved to appear so.

Char. Oh, I cannot help it, I love you dearly; and, pray, where's the harm of it?

Soph. Look you, sister, I grant you, that risibility is only given to the *animal rationale*; but you really indulge it, as if you could give no other proof of your species.

Char. And if I were to come into your sentiments, dear sister, I am afraid the world would think I were of no species at all.

Soph. The world, sister, is a generation of ignorants: and, for my part, I am resolved to do what in me lies, to put an end to posterity.

Char. Why, you don't despair of a man, I hope!

Soph. No; but I will have all mankind despair of me.

Char. You'll positively die a maid?

Soph. You, perhaps, may think that dying a martyr; but I shall not die a brute, depend upon't.

Char. Nay, I don't think you'll die either, if you can help it.

Soph. What do you mean, Madam?

Char. Only, Madam, that you are a woman, and may happen to change your mind; that's all.

Soph. A woman! That's so like your ordinary way of thinking; as if souls had any sexes—No—when I die, Madam, I shall endeavour to leave such sentiments behind me, that—(*non omnis moriar*) the world will be convinced my purer part had no sex at all.

Char.

Char. Why truly, it will be hard to imagine, that any one of our sex could make such a resolution; though, I hope, we are not bound to keep all we make neither.

Soph. You'll find, Madam, that an elevated soul may be always master of its perishable part.

Char. But, dear Madam, do you suppose our souls are crammed into our bodies merely to spoil sport, that a virtuous woman is only sent hither of a fool's errand? What's the use of our coming into the world, if we are to go out of it, and leave nobody behind us?

Soph. If our species can be only supported by those gross mixtures, of which cookmaids and footmen are capable, people of rank and erudition ought certainly to detest them. Oh, what a pity 'tis the divine secret should be lost! I have somewhere read of an ancient naturalist, whose laborious studies had discovered a more innocent way of propagation; but, it seems, his tables unfortunately falling into his wife's hands, the gross creature threw them into the fire.

Char. Indeed, my dear sister, if you talk thus in company, people will take you for a mad-woman.

Soph. I shall be even with them, and think those mad, that differ from my opinion.

Char. But I rather hope the world will be so charitable, as to think this is not your real opinion.

Soph. I shall wonder at nothing that's said or thought by people of your sullied imagination.

Char. Sullied! I would have you to know, Madam, I think of nothing but what's decent and natural.

Soph. Don't be too positive, nature has it indecencies.

Char. That may be; but I don't think of them.

Soph. No! Did not you own to me just now, you were determined to marry?

Char. Well; and where's the crime, pray?

Soph. What! you want to have me explain? But I shall not defile my imagination with such gross ideas.

Char. But, dear Madam, if marriage were such an abominable business, how comes it that all the world allows it to be honourable? And I hope you won't expect me to be wiser than any of my ancestors, by thinking the contrary.

Soph. No; but if you will read history, sister, you will find that the subjects of the greatest empire upon earth were only propagated from violated chastity: the Sabine ladies were wives, 'tis true, but glorious ravished wives. Vanquished they were indeed, but they surrendered not: they screamed, and cried, and tore, and as far as their weak limbs would give them leave, resisted and abhorred the odious joy——

Char. And yet, for all that niceness, they brought a chopping race of rakes, that bullied the whole world about them.

Soph. The greater still their glory, that though they were naturally prolific, their resistance proved they were not slaves to appetite.

Char. Ah, sister! if the Romans had not been so sharp set, the glorious resistance of these fine ladies might have been all turned into coquetry.

Soph. There's the secret, sister: had our modern dames but the true Sabine spirit of disdain, mankind might be again reduced to those old Roman extremities; and our shameless brides would not then be led, but dragged to the altar; their *sponsalia* not called a marriage, but a sacrifice: and the conquered beauty, not the bridal virgin, but the victim.

Char. Oh, ridiculous! and so you would have no woman married, that was not first ravished, according to law?

Soph. I would have mankind owe their conquest of us rather to the weakness of our limbs, than of our souls. And if defenceless women must be mothers, the brutality, at least, should lie all at their door.

Char. Have a care of this over-niceness, dear sister, lest some agreeable young fellow should seduce you to the confusion of parting with it. You'd make a most rueful figure in love!

Soph. Sister, you make me shudder at your freedom! I in love! I admit a man! What, become the voluntary, the lawful object of a corporeal sensuality! Like you, to choose myself a tyrant! a despoiler! a husband! Ugh.

Char. I am afraid, by this disorder of your thoughts,
dear

dear sister, you have got one in your head, that you don't know how to get rid of.

Soph. I have, indeed; but it's only the male creature that you have a mind to.

Char. Why, that's possible too; for I have often observed you uneasy at Mr. Frankly's being particular to me.

Soph. If I am, 'tis upon your account, because I know he imposes upon you.

Char. You know it?

Soph. I know his heart, and that another is mistress of it.

Char. Another!

Soph. Another; but one that to my knowledge will never hear of him; so don't be uneasy, dear sister, all in my power you may be assured of.

Char. Surprisingly kind, indeed!

Soph. And you know too I have a great deal in my inclination——

Char. For me or him, dear sister?

Soph. Nay, now you won't suffer me to oblige you; I tell you, I hate the animal; and for half a good word would give him away.

Char. What! before you have him?

Soph. This affected ignorance is so vain, dear sister, that I now think it high time to explain to you.

Char. Then we shall understand one another.

Soph. You don't know, perhaps, that Mr. Frankly is passionately in love with me?

Char. I know, upon his treating with my father, his lawyer once made you some offers.

Soph. Why then you may know too, that upon my slighting those offers, he fell immediately into a violent despair.

Char. I did not hear of its violence.

Soph. So violent, that he has never since dared to open his lips to me about it; but to revenge the secret pains I gave him, has made his public addresses to you.

Char. Indeed, sister, you surprise me: and 'tis hard to say, that men impose more upon us, than we upon ourselves.

Soph. Therefore by what I have told you, you may now be convinced he is false to you.

Char. But is there a necessity, my dear Sophronia, that I must rather believe you than him? Ha, ha, ha!

Soph. How, Madam! Have you the confidence to question my veracity, by supposing me capable of an endeavour to deceive you?

Char. No hard words, dear sister: I only suppose you as capable of deceiving yourself, as I am.

Soph. Oh, mighty probable, indeed! You are a person of infinite penetration! Your studies have opened to you the utmost recesses of human nature; but let me tell you, sister, that vanity is the only fruit of toilette lucubrations. I deceive myself: ha, ha, ha!

Char. One of us certainly does! Ha, ha!

Soph. There I agree with you. Ha, ha!

Char. Till I am better convinced then on which side the vanity lies, give me leave to laugh in my turn, dear sister.

Soph. Oh, by all means, sweet Madam! Ha, ha!

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Oh, here's mamma; she perhaps may decide the question. Ha, ha!

Enter Lady Wrangle.

L. Wrang. So, Mrs. Charlotte! what wonderful nothing, pray, may be the subject of this mighty merriment?

Soph. Nothing indeed, Madam; or, what's next to nothing; a man, it seems. Ha, ha!

L. Wrang. Charlotte, wilt thou never have any thing else in thy head?

Char. I was in hopes, nothing, that was in my sister's head, would be a crime in mine, Madam.

L. Wrang. Your sister's! What? How? Who is it you are laughing at?

Char. Only at one another, Madam; but, perhaps, your ladyship may laugh at us both: for, it seems, my sister and I both insist, that Mr. Frankly is positively in love but with one of us.

L. Wrang. Who, child?

Soph. Mr. Frankly, Madam.

L. Wrang.

L. Wrang. Mr. Frankly in love with one of you!

Soph. Ay, Madam; but it seems we both take him to ourselves.

L. Wrang. Then Charlotte was in the right in one point.

Soph. In what, dear Madam?

L. Wrang. Why, that for the same reason you have been laughing at one another, I must humbly beg leave to laugh at you both——Ha, ha!

Char. So, this is rare sport. [*Aside.*

L. Wrang. But pray, ladies, how long has the chimera of this gentleman's passion for you been in either of your heads?

Soph. Nay, Madam, not that I value the conquest; but your ladyship knows he once treated with my father upon my account.

L. Wrang. I know he made that his pretence to get acquainted in the family.

Soph. Perhaps, Madam, I have more coercive reasons; but am not concerned enough at present to insist upon their validity.

L. Wrang. Sophronia, you have prudence. [*Sophronia walks by and reads.*] But what have you to urge, sweet lady? How came this gentleman into your head, pray?

Char. Really, Madam, I can't well say how he got in, but there he is, that's certain: what will be able to get him out again, heaven knows.

L. Wrang. Oh, I'll inform you then; think no more of him than he thinks of you, and I'll answer for your cure. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. I shall follow your prescription, Madam, when I am once sure how little he thinks on me.

L. Wrang. Then judge of that, when I assure you, that his heart is utterly and solely given up to me.

Soph. Well! I did not think my Lady had been capable of so much weakness. [*Aside.*

Char. How! to you, Madam? How is that possible, unless he makes you dishonourable offers?

L. Wrang. There's no occasion to suppose that neither; there are passions you have no notion of: he knows my

virtue is impregnable: but that——preserves him mine.

Char. Nay, this does puzzle me indeed, Madam.

Soph. If you had ever read Plato, sister, you might have known, that passions of the greatest dignity have not their source from veins and arteries.

L. Wrang. Sophronia, give me leave to judge of that; perhaps I don't insist that he is utterly Platonic neither: the mansion of the soul may have its attractions too; he is as yet but *adum & molle lutum*——and may take what form I please to give him.

Char. Well, Madam, since I see he is so utterly at your ladyship's disposal, and that 'tis impossible your virtue can make any use of him in my vulgar way; shall I beg your good word to my father, only to make me mistress of his mortal part?

L. Wrang. Heavens! what will this world come to? 'This creature has scarce been two years from school, and yet is impatient for a husband?' No, Madam, you are too young as yet; but——*Cruda marito.* Your education is not yet finished; first cultivate your mind, 'correct and mortify these sallies of your blood;' learn of your sister here, to live a bright example of your sex; refine your soul; give your happier hours up to science, arts, and letters; enjoy the raptures of philosophy, subdue your passions, and renounce the sensual commerce of mankind.

Char. Oh, dear Madam, I should make a piteous philosopher; indeed your ladyship had much better put me out to the business I am fit for: here's my sister has learning enough o'conscience for any one family; and, of the two, I had much rather follow your ladyship's example, and use my humble endeavours to increase it.

L. Wrang. My example! Do you suppose then, if I had been capable of gross desires, I would have chosen your father for the gratificator of them?

Char. Why not, Madam; my papa's a hale man, and though he has twice your ladyship's age, he walks as straight, and leads up a country-dance as brisk as a beau at a ball.

L. Wrang. Come, none of your sensual inferences from

from thence; I was governed by my parents, I had other views in marrying Mr. Wrangle.

Char. Yes, a swinging jointure. [*Aside.*]

L. Wrang. When you have gone through my studies, Madam, philosophy will tell you, 'tis possible a well-natured mind, though fated to a husband, may be at once a wife and virgin.

Char. Prodigious! [*Aside.*]

L. Wrang. What is't you smile at, Madam?

Char. Nothing, Madam, only I don't understand these philosophical mysteries; but if your ladyship will indulge me, in marrying Mr. Frankly, as for dying a maid afterwards, I'll take my chance for it.

L. Wrang. What a giddy confidence! But thou art strangely vain, Charlotte, to be so importunate for a man, that, as I have told thee, has the misfortune to be passionately in love with me.

Char. Indeed, indeed, Madam, if your ladyship would but give him leave to open his mind freely, he would certainly tell you another story.

L. Wrang. I will send for him this minute, and convince you of your error.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, Mr. Frankly.

L. Wrang. He never came more opportunely: desire him to walk in.

Enter Mr. Frankly.

L. Wrang. Oh, Mr. Frankly, the welcomest man alive.

Fran. Then I am the happiest, I am sure, Madam.

L. Wrang. Oh, fy! is there any one of this company could make you so?

Fran. There's one in the company, Madam, has a great deal more in her power, than I'm afraid she'll part with to me.

Soph. Are you this hard-hearted lady, sister? Does this description reach you, pray? [*Aside.*]

Char. The power does not describe you, I'll answer for it. [*Aside.*]

L. Wrang. Nay, now you grow particular—You have something to say to one of these ladies, I'm sure.

[*To Frankly.*]

Fran.

Fran. I have something, Madam, to say to both of them.

Soph. Shall we let him speak, sister?

Char. Freely.

L. Wrang. Which of these two, now, if you were free to choose, could you really give up your heart to?

Fran. Oh, Madam! as to that, I dare only say, as Sir John Suckling did upon the same occasion.

Soph. Pray, what was that?

Fran. He sure is happiest that has hopes of either;

Next him is he that sees you both together.

L. Wrang. Perfectly fine—Nor is there more wit in the verses themselves, than in your polite application of them—Mr. Frankly, I must beg your pardon—I know it's rude to whisper; but you have good-nature; and, to oblige a woman—

Fran. Is the business of my life, Madam—What the devil can all this mean? I have been oddly catechized here—Sure they have not all agreed to bring me to a declaration for one of them—It looks a little like it—But then, how comes Charlotte into so vain a project? Nay, so hazardous! She can't but know, my holding the other two in play, has been the only means of my getting admittance to her—Perhaps they may have piqued her into this experiment—not unlikely. But I must be cautious. [Aside.]

L. Wrang. Nay, ladies, you can't but say I laid you fairly in his way. [Apart to Soph. and Char.] And yet you see from how palpable a regard to me he has ingeniously avoided a declaration, for either of you, at least.

Soph. Your ladyship won't be offended, if, for a moment, we should suspend your conclusion.

L. Wrang. Not in the least; if suspense can make you happy, live always in it.

Char. But, pray, Madam, let him go on a little.

L. Wrang. Oh, you shall have enough of him. Well, you are a horrid tyrant, Mr. Frankly. Don't you plainly see, here are two ladies in this company, that have a mind you should declare in favour of one of them?

Fran. Yes, Madam; but I plainly see, there are three ladies in the company.

L. Wrang. What then?

Fran.

Fran. Why, then, Madam, I am more afraid of offending that third person, than either of the other two.

L. Wrang. [*To Soph. and Char.*] Observe his diffidence, his awe; he knows I love respect.

Soph. With submission, Madam, I never was familiar with him.

L. Wrang. Come, now, do you both ask the question, as I have done, each exclusive of herself.

Char. Your ladyship's in the right———[*Aside.*

Sir, without any apology then, I am obliged to ask you, whether it be my Lady or my sister, you are really in love with?

Fran. So, now it's plain. [*Aside.*] When either of them ask me, you'll be out of the question, I can assure you, Madam.

L. Wrang. Ha, ha!

Soph. Who's in the question now, sister?

Char. If I had put myself in, you would not have been there, I'll answer for him. [*Aside.*

Soph. Then, I'll do you that favour, Madam.

Fran. So, now the other—but I am ready for her too.

Soph. You see, Sir, the humour we are in: though don't suppose, if I ask you the same question, 'tis from the same motive; but since these ladies have obliged me to it——Which of them is it you sincerely are a slave to?

Fran. Since I find your motive is only complaisance to them, Madam, I hope you will not think it needs an answer.

Soph. I am satisfied—Your ladyship was pleased to mention respect—I think there's respect and demonstration too, Madam. [*Aside to L. Wrang.*

L. Wrang. I grant it; 'but both to me, child.' But I will speak once more for all of us—Sir, that you may not be reduced to farther ambiguities, suppose we are all agreed, you should have leave to declare which of us, then, your heart is utterly in the disposal of?

Fran. Then I must suppose, Madam, that one of you have a mind I should make the other two my enemies.

L. Wrang. All your friends, depend upon us.

Fran. So were all the three goddesses to Paris, Madam, till

till he presumed to be particular, and rashly gave the apple to Venus—You know, Madam, Juno was his immortal enemy ever after.

——— *Manet alid mente repōsum*

Judicium Paridis, spretæque injuria formæ.

L. Wrang. Sir, you are excus'd; the modesty and elegance of your reply has charmed me.

Soph. Now, sister, was this delicacy of his taste and learning shewn to recommend himself to me or you, think you?

Char. Oh, I don't dispute its recommending him to you.

Soph. He thinks it does, depend upon't.

Char. Though I can hardly think that of him, yet I can't say, indeed, he has taken much pains to recommend himself to me all this while. I see no reason, because they are to be respected, forsooth, that I may not be pleased in my turn too. [To herself.]

Fran. And now, ladies, give me leave to ask you a question.

L. Wrang. You may command us, Sir.

Fran. Then, whose cruel proposal was it to urge me to a declaration of my heart, when you all knew there was not one of you, from the disposition of whose mind or circumstances, I could hope the least favour or mercy.

L. Wrang. Explain yourself.

Fran. Why, first, Madam, as to your ladyship, you are honourably disposed of; from you my utmost vanity could no more form a hope, than could your virtue give it—And here, [To Soph.] if possible, my fate were harder still—here I must have to encounter rivals numberless and invincible.

Soph. Rivals!

Fran. Ay, Madam, is not every volume in your library a rival? Do you not pass whole days, nay, sometimes, happier nights, with them alone? 'The living and the dead promiscuous in your favour?' Old, venerable sages, even in their graves, can give you raptures, from whose divine enjoyment no mortal lover can persuade you.

Soph. [To Char.] Is this to please you, sister?

Char. Truly, I think not—he has mistaken the way, at least.

Fran. [Turning to Char.] And here, Madam——

L. Wrang.

L. Wrang. Hold, Sir; a truce with your negatives, lest they grow too vehement in their affirmation. You have hitherto my esteem, preserve it by your discretion, and force me not to revoke the freedom I have this day given you. Sophronia, I have carried this matter to the very utmost limits of discretion. I hope you and your sister are now delivered from your error; if not, I'll instantly withdraw, and leave you to a full conviction. *[Exit.]*

Fran. I am afraid my Lady takes something ill of me.

Soph. Sir, what you have done was from her own desire; and since I partly am the occasion, it is but just I stand engaged for your reconciliation.

Fran. Then give me leave to hope, Madam——

Soph. From what pretension, Sir? From any weakness of my behaviour? Hope! Do you consider the licentious and extensive consequences of that odious word? Hope! You make me tremble at the thought.

Fran. Madam, I only mean——

Soph. I know your meaning, Sir: and therefore must not hear it.

Fran. This is new with a vengeance! *[Aside.]*

Soph. Sister, 'I am sorry our argument has reduced me to stand so outrageous an instance of your conviction; but you may profit from the insult:' you may now learn to moderate your vanity, and to know yourself. Oh, 'tis a heavenly lesson!——*E cælo descendit gnotbe scanton.* *[Exit.]*

Fran. What a solid happiness is now crept into her mind through the crack of her brain?—I hope you are not going too, Madam?

Char. I don't know any business I have here.

Fran. So——'Egad, I have disoblighd them all, I believe. *[Aside.]* You are not out of humour?

Char. I don't know whether I am or no.

Fran. So cold, Charlotte, after I have had my wits upon the stretch this half hour, to oblige you?

Char. What, in blowing up other people's vanity at my expence?

Fran. Would you have had me blown up their jealousy, at the expence of my being well with you?

Char. You, that are so dexterous in imposing upon others, may impose upon me too, for ought I know.

Fran.

‘*Fran.* Come, come, don’t impose upon yourself, Charlotte, by this groundless, this childish resentment.

‘*Char.* She that has no resentment at all, may be under-treated as long as she lives, I find.’

Fran. Pray, think a little. Is my having made them ridiculous by your own consent, exposing you to them, or them to you?

Char. I don’t know how the matter’s contrived; but I certainly find myself uneasy, and you can’t persuade me I am not so.

Fran. Well, well; since you can’t justify your being in an ill humour, it’s a fair step, at least, to your coming into a good one.

Char. Come, I will not be wheedled now.

Fran. Nay, but hear me.

Sophronia enters unseen, while Frankly seems to entertain Charlotte apart.

Soph. What can these creatures be doing alone together? ‘I thought I left my sister in too ill a humour to retire with him; but I see these carnage lovers have such a meanness in their souls, they’ll overlook the grossest usage to accommodate their sensual concorporation.’ ‘Tis so—her eyes have lost all resentment already. But I must not be seen, lest they mistake my innocent curiosity for jealousy.

Char. Well, but you might have thrown in a civil thing to me in my turn too.

Fran. Alas, poor lady! Pray, what one civil thing did I mean to any body but yourself? Besides, was not you one of the three goddesses, Miss Charlotte? Which of the company do you suppose I meant by Venus, pray?

Char. How silly you make me?

Fran. Nay, I was going to say a great deal more to you, if my Lady had not stopped my mouth.

Soph. Is it possible?

[*Aside.*

Char. Why, then, I beg your pardon; for, in short, I find I have only been fool enough to be uneasy, because they had not sense enough to be mortified.

Fran. A pretty innocent confession, truly!

Soph. Have I my senses?

Char. Well, but tell me, what was it you had a mind to say to me?

Fran.

Fran. Nothing to what I now could say—Oh, Charlotte, my heart grows full of you; the least look of kindness softens me to folly!—Indeed I love you.

Soph. So!—

Char. And for what, after all? [*Smiling.*]

Fran. For that, and for a thousand charms beside. [*Pressing her hand.*] There's something in your looks so soft, so gentle, so resign'd, and plaintive; I loved before I knew it, and only thought I gave the pity that I wanted.

Char. What transport's in the passion, when the tenderness is mutual!

Soph. Oh, the enormous creature! but I'll begone, lest her intoxication should know no bounds—No, on second thoughts, I'll stay; 'this odious object may be useful; vipers, if rightly taken, are preservatives: and as the Spartans taught their children to abhor intemperance, by shewing them their slaves exposed, and senseless in their wine; so I, in contemplation of this folly, may be fortified against it.' Oh, the abandoned wantons!—What a riotous disorder now must run through every vein of her whole system? How can they thus deface the dignity of human being?—[*During this Fr. and Char. seem in an amorous dispute, till he kisses her.*]—A kiss! nay, then, 'tis insupportable. [*She goes to them.*] Sister, I am amazed you can stand trifling here, when my father is come home, and you know he wants you.

Char. She has certainly seen us. [*Aside to Fran.*]

Fran. No matter; seem easy, and take no notice.

[*Apart to Char.*]

Soph. Shall I tell him you will not come, Madam?

Char. Well, do not be in a passion, dear sister.

Fran. Oh, fie! why should you think so? But is Sir Gilbert come in, Madam? I have a little business with him. If you please, Madam, I'll wait upon you to him.

Char. With all my heart.

Fran. *Amaute spose, &c.* [*Singing.*]

[*Exit Fran. and Char.*]

Soph. What means this turbulence of thought? 'Why, am I thus disordered!' It cannot, nay, I will not have it jealousy—No, if I were capable of folly, Granger might mislead me; yet still I am disturbed—Yes, 'tis plain,

‘plain, I am incensed, provoked at him;’ but can I not assign the cause?—Oh, I have found it!—Having first offered up his heart to me, his giving it to another, without my leave, is an insult on my merit, and worthy my resentment—that’s all—How, then, shall I punish him? By securing her to his rival. Witling shall have her; I’ll work it by my Lady; she seems his friend—‘Yes, yes, that will entirely ease my heart. How I rejoice to find ‘tis only decent pride that has disturbed me. Yes, I’ll certainly resent it, to their mutual disappointment.’ Thus both shall suffer, doom’d to different fates: His be despair; be hers, the man she hates.

[Exit.

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

Lady Wrangle, and Sophronia.

LADY WRANGLE.

IMPossible! You amaze me! Kifs her, say you? What, as a lover, amorously, voluptuously?

Soph. Infamously, with all the glowing fervour of a libertine.

L. Wrang. Then I am deceived indeed. ‘I thought that virtue, letters, and philosophy, had only charms for him: I have known his soul all rapture in their praises; nay, and believed myself the secret object of them all. But is he vulgar, brutal, then, at last? No Punic faith so false. ‘Tis well; he has deceived me, and I hate him. Oh, that forward creature!

‘*Soph.* She warms as I could wish. [Aside.

‘*L. Wrang.* But, tell me, dear Sophronia, how did that naughty girl behave to him? Was the shame chiefly his? Did she resist, or—how was this odious kifs obtained? Were his persuasions melting, or her allurements artful? Was he ensnared, or did his wiles seduce her?’ Oh, tell me all his baseness! I burn to know, yet wish to be deceived.

Soph. —*Speratque miserrima falli*—Directly jealous of him; but I’ll make my uses of it. [Aside.] Nay, Madam, I must

I must own the guilty part was chiefly hers. Had you but seen the warm advances that she made him, 'the looks, the smiles, the toying glances; Oh, such wanton blandishments to allure him!' you would think his crime, compared to hers, but frailty.

L. Wrang. Oh, the little forcerers! But I shall stop her in her loose career: I'll have her know, forward as she is, her inclinations shall wait upon my choice; and since she will run riot, I'll have her clogged immediately. I'll marry her, Sophronia; but, where I think fit. No, Mr. Witling is her man, or she's a maid for ever.

Soph. That, Madam, I doubt, she will never be brought to; she mortally hates him.

L. Wrang. So much the better; I do not design him, therefore, as her happiness, but her punishment.

Soph. This is fortunate; she even prevents my purpose. [Aside.]

L. Wrang. Oh, that a man of his sublime faculties could fall from such a height! Was ever any thing so mean, Sophronia?

Soph. I am surprized indeed. My sister, too, is so illiterate, Madam.

L. Wrang. To contaminate his intellects with such a chit of an animal; *O tempora!*

Soph. *O mores!* 'Tis a degenerate age, indeed, Madam.

L. Wrang. Nothing but noise and ignorance; girls and vanity have their attractions now.

Soph. Oh, there's no living, Madam, while coquettes are so openly tolerated among a civilized people!

L. Wrang. I protest, they are so insolently insidious, they are become mere nuisances to all innocent society.

Soph. I am amazed the government should not set the idle creatures to work.

L. Wrang. The wisdom of our ancestors restrained such horrid licences; and, you see, the laws they made, described them all by the modest term of spinsters only.

But I'll take care of her, 'at least; and since she is become a public mischief, to humble her will be a public good.' I'll send to Mr. Witling this moment, and invite him to dine here. I desire you will be in the way, child, and assist me in bringing this matter to a speedy conclusion.

[Exit.
Soph.

Soph. Yes, I shall assist you, Madam; though not to gratify your resentments, but my own. Poor lady! is this then all the fruit of your philosophy? 'Is this her conduct of the passions, not to endure another should possess what she pretends to scorn? Are these her self-denials? Where, where was her self-examination all this while? The least inquiry there had shown these passions as they are: then had she seen, that all this anger at my sister was but envy: those reproaches on her lover, jealousy; even that jealousy, the child of vanity, and her avowed resentment, malice!' Good Heaven! Can she be this creature, and know it not?—And yet 'tis so—so partial's Nature to herself,

That charity begins, where knowledge shou'd,
And all our wisdom's counsell'd by the blood!
The faults of others we with ease discern,
But our own frailties are the last we learn.

[*Going off she meets Frankly and Charlotte?*]

Ha! perpetually together!

Char. In contemplation, sister? I am afraid we disturb you: come, Mr. Frankly, we'll go into the next room.

Soph. No, Madam, if you have any secrets, I'll retire,

Char. Nay, we have none now, sister, but what I dare swear you are certainly let into: ha, ha, ha!

Fran. So she must have a gentle insult, I find; but it will be prudent in me to keep the peace. [*Aside.*]

Soph. These taunts are insupportable! but to confess the smart, were adding to her triumph. [*Aside.*]

Char. Why so grave, Sophronia?

Soph. Why that question, Madam? Do you often see me otherwise?

Char. No; but I thought, upon your supposing we had secrets, you drew up a little.

Soph. 'Tis possible, I might not be in a laughing humour, without thinking any of your secrets important.

Fran. People, Madam, that think much, always wear a serious aspect. [*To Char.*]

Soph. As the contrary, sister, may be a reason for your continual mirth.

Char. Well, well; so I am but happy, sister, I am content you should be wise as long as you live.

Soph.

Soph. You have one sign of wisdom, I see: a little thing contents you—There's no bearing her. [*Ex. Soph.*]

Char. She's in a high mist.

Fran. I am afraid there is no good towards us: I observed my lady, as she passed too, had much the same cloud upon her brow.

Char. Then she has certainly told her how she caught us fooling together.

Fran. No doubt on't; therefore we must expect all the mischief that either of them can do us.

Char. My sister can't do us much, at least.

Fran. She can blow up my lady; and, you know, my lady governs your father.

Char. She does a little overbear him indeed; not but he will make his party good with her upon occasion: I have known it come to a drawn battle between them, especially when he has any body to stand by him. A sad life though, Mr. Frankly, when conjugal engagements are only battles; does not their example frighten you?

Fran. I can see no hazard, in taking my chance with you, Madam.

Sophronia returns, and stops short, seeing Frankly taking Charlotte's hand.

Soph. So! closing again the minute they are alone; but I shall make bold with them. [*Goes forward. Pray, sister, what did you do with that book of mine you took up this morning?*]

Char. What book?

Soph. The Confucius, you know, in my chamber.

Char. Oh, I did not mind it; I left it upon the green table.

Soph. Very well—that's all—I beg your pardon. What a melancholy sight she is!

[*Exit, and drops her handkerchief.*]

Fran. This book was only a pretence to break in upon us.

Char. Plainly—the haunts us like the ghost in Hamlet. But pray, what talk had you with my father just now?

Fran. A great deal; we are upon very good terms there; I can tell you: but his conscience, it seems, is under the most ridiculous dilemma, sure, that ever was.

Char. What do you mean?

Fran. If you will have patience to hear it, I'll tell you.

Char. I shall have no patience till I do hear it.

Fran. You must know then, some time ago, ' Sir Gilbert happened in a mixed company in Change-Alley, ' to join in a laugh at Mr. Witting, ' for his folly (as it ' was then thought) in giving out premiums for the refusal of South-Sea stock at an extravagant price: the ' beau being piqued to an intemperance, to see his bargains a jest, offered, in heat of blood, to back his judgment with more money, for a harder bargain, and ten times as chimerical.

Char. Ay, now let's hear.

Fran. Thus it was: he told an hundred guineas into your father's hand; in consideration of which, (if Witting could prove himself worth fifty thousand pounds within the year, and the South-Sea stock should in that time mount to a thousand per cent. why then, and on those conditions only) your father was to give him the refusal of you, or your sister, in marriage. ' This whimsical offer turned the laugh of the company to the ' beau's side, at which Sir Gilbert, impatient of his triumph, and not being in the least apprehensive ' either of the stocks rising to that price, or that this rattle-headed fellow could possibly make such a fortune in that time, fairly took the money, and signed ' the contract.' Now the stock, it seems, is come up to his price, and the spark has actually proved himself worth near double the sum he conditioned for.

Char. For heaven's sake! am I to take all this seriously?

Fran. Upon my life, 'tis true: but don't mistake the matter; Sir Gilbert has left his daughter's inclinations free: there is no force to be put upon them in the bargain.

Char. Oh, then I can take my breath again.

Fran. No, no; you are safe as to that point: you may do as you please; he has only tied up his own consent. But Witting having this call upon it, Sir Gilbert is incapable, as he says, of giving it, at present, to me.

Char. Well; but in the mean time, suppose he should give it to you; what's the penalty?

Fran. That's true; I had like to have forgot it: the penalty is this; if Sir Gilbert refuses his consent, then he is to give Witting an alternative of the three thousand pounds stock only, at two hundred. So low it seems was the price when this bargain was made.

Char. A pinching article: I am afraid my good father has not distaste enough for a coxcomb, to part with his stock, and not toss him a daughter in the bargain.

Fran. Ay, but consider; Sir Gilbert is not to part with his stock neither, if you refuse to marry the gentleman.

Char. Why then the fool has given his money for nothing; at least I am sure he has, if he makes his call upon me.

Fran. Ay, but here's the misfortune; the fool has been wise enough to do that already: Sir Gilbert tells me, he has insisted upon you; and you may be sure my lady, and your sister, will do all in their power to hold your father to his bargain: so that, while the contract's valid, it will not be even in your power, Charlotte, to complete my happiness this half year.

Char. It gives me at least occasion to shew you a new proof of my inclination; for I confess, I shall be as uneasy as you, 'till, one way or other, this ridiculous bargain is out of that coxcomb's hands again.

Fran. Oh, Charlotte! lay your hand upon my heart, and feel how sensibly it thanks you.

Char. Foolish!

Sophronia enters, as looking for her handkerchief, and observes them.

Soph. Monstrous! actually embracing him! What have her transports made her blind too? Sure she might see me.

Char. Be but ruled, and I'll engage to manage it.

Fran. I have a lucky thought, that certainly—

Char. Peace! break thee off! Lo! where it comes again.

Fran. Speak to it, Horatio—

[Seeing Soph.

Char. Do you want any thing, sister?

Soph.

Soph. Ay! did not I drop an handkerchief here?

Char. I did not see any——Oh, here——I believe this is it. [Gives it her.]

[They all stand gravely mute for some time, at last, Charlotte, as uneasy at her company, speaks,

Char. Do you want any thing else, sister?

Soph. [Turning short upon her.]——Yes, Madam——Patience——to support me under your injurious assurance.

Char. Keep your temper, sister, lest I should suspect your philosophy to be only an affectation of knowledge you never could arrive at.

Soph. There are some surprises, Madam, too strong for all the guards of human constancy.

Char. Yet I have heard you say, Madam, 'tis a narrowness of mind to be surprised at any thing.

Soph. To be amazed at the actions of the unjust, and the abandoned, is a weakness that often arises from innocence and virtue: you must therefore pardon me, if I am astonished at your behaviour.

Fran. So! I suppose I shall have my share presently. [Aside.]

Char. My behaviour, Madam, is not to be asperged by outrage; and if I am not astonished at yours, 'tis because the folly of it ought to move no passion but laughter.

Soph. This to me! to me, Mrs. Charlotte?

Char. Ay, ay! to you, Mrs. Sophronia.

Fran. I beg your pardon, ladies, I see you have private business. [Going.]

Soph. No, Sir,——hold——you are at least an accomplice, if not the principal, in the injury I complain of.

Fran. You do me a great deal of honour, Madam, in supposing any thing in my power could disturb you; but pray, Madam, wherein have I been so unhappy as to injure you?

Soph. In the tenderest part; my fame, my sense, my merit, and (as the world esteems it) in my sex's glory.

Fran. Accumulated wrongs, indeed! But really, Madam,

'Madam, I am yet in the dark; I must beg you to explain a little farther.'

Soph. Then plainly thus, Sir: you have robbed me of my right; the vows of love you once preferred to me, are by the laws of honour, without my consent, irrevocable: but, like a vile apostate, you have since presumed to throw your scornful malice on my attractions, by basely kneeling to another.

Char. Oh, the painful conflicts of prudence! [*Aside.*]

Fran. 'This is hard indeed, Madam, that the loss of what you never thought worth your acceptance, should be worth your resentment.' If a beggar should ask you charity, would you call it an injury, if, upon refusing it, the wretch should beg of the next passenger?

Char. Well; is not that prettily said now, sister?

Soph. The case is different—You owe me tribute as your rightful conqueror; and though I have declined the tasteless triumph of your homage, that's no remittance of the duty: nor can you pay it to the usurper of my right, without rebellious perjury to me.

Fran. Hoyty! toyty! 'Egad there will be no end of this—I must even talk downright to her. [*Aside.*]

Soph. Oblations vow'd to a peculiar power, are to its peculiar altars only due; and though the offering might be ill-received, yet should the murmuring suppliant dare to invoke another's aid, his vows are then become profane and impious to the Deity.

Char. So! since he would not make her a goddess, I find she's resolved to make one of herself. [*Aside.*]

Fran. Now really, Madam, if I were to put all this into plain English, the translation would amount to no more than this, that your offended deity is a mere dog in a manger: what the deuce, because you don't love oats, must nobody else eat them? Ha, ha!

Char. Ha! ha! ha!

Soph. Amazement! horror! I am shocked and shivered to a thousand atoms! Oh, my violated ears!

Fran. Ay, ay! Madam, you may give yourself as many romantic airs as you please; but, in short, I can play the civil hypocrite no longer.

Soph. Ye powers above, he triumphs in brutality!

Fran. That is, Madam, because you will always take civility,

THE REFUSAL.

civility for adoration. But however, to clear up this whole matter; if, for once, you can reduce yourself from a deity to what nature has made you, a woman of sense, I'll beg pardon for my brutality, and speak to you like a gentleman.

Soph. You may suppose me then to have the sense you speak of.

Fran. Why then I own, Madam, when first I came from travel; my good father, on whom I then depended, recommended me to an alliance in this family: I thought myself honoured in his commands; and being equally a stranger to you and your sister, I judged, as being the elder, you had a natural right to the preference of my addresses: I saw you, saw your person lovely, adorned with all those charms that usually inspire the lover's tongue to bend the ear of beauty——

Char. How she drops her eyes at it! [*Aside.*]

Fran. But on a nearer converse, I found you scarce a mortal in your sentiments; so utter a disdain of love! had you imbibed from your romantic education: nowonder I succeeded not: I shall not reproach you with my peculiar treatment: you pleased yourself, and I re-treated. On this I thought my heart at liberty to try its better fortune here. Here I am fix'd, and justify my love; where then is the injury to you, in laying at your sister's feet a heart, which your disdain rejected!

Soph. 'Tis true, while offered with impure desires: while sensually, and as a woman only, you pursued me: but had you greatly sought the marriage of the mind, the social raptures of the soul; I might perhaps have cherished an intellectual union.

Fran. Ah! but dear, dear Madam, those raptures in the air would not do my business; I want an heir to my family, and in plain terms my case requires one that will give a little bodily help to it.

Soph. Nay then again, I must disclaim you; a heart so tainted would but sully the receiver: the shrine's dishonoured by a polluted sacrifice.

Char. So! she's at her old flights again. [*Aside.*]

Soph. Thus then I fly for ever from your hopes——

Thus

Thus Daphne triumph'd o'er Apollo's flame,
And to his heav'n prefer'd a virgin's name :
The vanquish'd God pursu'd, but to despair,
While deathless laurels crown'd the flying fair.

[Exit.

Fran. So! there's one plague over; I have discharged my conscience upon her at least.

Char. Ha! ha! what a pretty way, though, my good sister has, of turning a flight into a triumph! But she has a great heart.

Fran. O! 'twould be hard to deny her that satisfaction; beside, the greatest heart in the world did just the same: we have known the late *grand monarque* lose many a Battle; but it was bloody hard to beat him out of a *Ten Deum*.

Char. Well, but now, how shall we manage my father?

Fran. Here he comes.

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir. Gilb. So, Mr. Frankly! you see I give you fair play—and, troth, I have a great respect for you—but—a—a bargain's a bargain; if another man has really paid for my consent, you must not take it ill, if I don't refuse him.

Fran. I can't pretend to ask it, Sir: I think it favour enough, if you don't oblige your daughter to refuse me.

Sir Gilb. Not I, not I, man; that's out of the question: she may please herself, and if Witling should not please her; troth! I cannot say it would not please me too: in short, if you two have wit enough to make up the difference, and bring me off—why there's no more to be said—If not—accounts must be made up—I have taken the premium, and must stand to my contract: for let me tell you, Sir, we citizens, are as tender of our credit in Change-Alley, as you fine gentlemen are of your honour at court.

Fran. Sir, depend upon it, your credit shall not suffer by me, whatever it may by your comparison.

Sir Gilb. Why, what ails the comparison? Sir, I think the credit of the city may be compared to that of any body of men in Europe.

Fran.

Fran. Yes, Sir; but you mistake me: I question if any bodies may be compared to that of the city.

Sir Gib. O! your humble servant, Sir; I did not take you—ay, ay, you're right! you're right! Ay, ay, ay, live and learn, Mr. Frankly: you'll find 'tis not your court, but city politicians must do the nation's business at last. Why, what did your courtiers do all the last reigns, but borrow money to make war, and make war to make peace, and make peace to make war; and then to be bullies in one, and bubbles in t'other? A very pretty account truly; but we have made money, man: money! money! there's the health and life-blood of a government: and therefore I insist upon it, that we are the wisest citizens in Europe; for we have coined more cash in an hour, than the tower of London in twenty years.

Fran. Nay, you govern the world now, its plain, Sir, and truly that makes us hope it's upon the mending hand: for since our men of quality are got so thick into Change-Alley, who knows but in time a great man's word may go as far as a tradesman's?

Sir Gib. Ah! a wag, a wag! In troth, Mr. Frankly, the more I know you, the more I like you: I see you know the world, you judge of men by their intrinsic value; and you're right! you're right! titles are empty things. A wise man will always be a wise man, whether he has any title or no.

Fran. Ay, ay, Sir, and when a fool gets one, he's only known to be a greater fool.

Sir Gib. You're right again: besides, Sir, shall any man value himself upon a thing that another may buy for his money as well as he? Ridiculous—a very pretty business truly, to give ten or twenty thousand pounds, only to be called out of one's name: Ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Nay, Sir, and perhaps too, losing the privilege of a private subject, that of being believed upon your honour, or trusted upon your word.

Sir Gib. Honour's a joke! Is not every honest man a man of honour?

Fran. Ay, but the best joke is, that every man of honour is not an honest man, Sir.

Sir Gib. Odsbedlikins, Mr. Frankly, you are an ingenious gentleman, and I must have you into my family, though

though it cost me twenty thousand pounds to keep that pragmatical fellow out on't.

Fran. ' If I have any pretence to your favour, Sir, I will take care your family shall not suffer by my coming into it: for if the worst must happen, 'tis but waiting till the other half year of Widing's contract is expired. I dare answer your daughter won't run away with him in the mean time.

Sir Gilb. Ay, but there's the question: is the girl staunch? Are you sure now, that like a young hound, she may not gallop away with the rank scent of a cockcomb, and so spoil your sport?

Fran. ' I dare say she will take this fear for a favour'—best examine her yourself, Sir.

Sir Gilb. Come hither, Charlotte.

Char. Your pleasure, Sir?

Sir Gilb. Are you sure you are as wise as other fine ladies of your age, that know more of mankind than their fathers, and consequently have a natural aversion to all husbands of their choosing? In short have you learnt enough of the world, to be heartily disobedient upon occasion?

Char. When you please to give me the occasion, Sir, I will try what I can do.

Sir Gilb. Humh! she promises fair. [*To Frankly aside.*] The girl has wit——But now, child, the question is whether you have common sense or no (for they don't always go together.) Are you smoky? Have you all your eye-teeth yet? Are you peery, as the cant is? In short do you know what I would be at now?

Char. Will you give me leave to guess, Sir?

Sir Gilb. Out with it.

Char. Why then, (I hope at least, Sir) you have a mind to make Widing believe, you are doing all in your power to bring his bargain to bear; and at the same time wish I would do all in my power to bring it to nothing.

Sir Gilb. [*Aside.*] It will do! it will do! Mr. Frankly; tell her she's right; you know it is not honest for me to say so: a hum!

Char. In short, Sir, if you'll leave the matter to my discretion, I'll engage to bring you off.

Sir Gilb. Bring me off, hussy! why; have you the

confidence to suppose I won't do the fair thing by the gentleman?

Char. I have not the confidence to suppose you would do a hard thing by this gentleman, indeed papa!

[Takes Frankly's hand.

Sir Gilb. 'D'ye hear! d'ye hear!' what a sensible assurance the slut has! Ah! it's a wheedling toad! [*Aside.*] Adod! I'll have a little more of her——but do you know, lady, that Mr. Witling has demanded my consent, and that it will cost me above twenty thousand pounds to refuse it?

Char. Yes, Sir, I do know it; and if I were to give him my consent, I know that I should have much the worst bargain of the two.

Sir Gilb. Your consent! Why sure, Madam, when I say, do so, do you pretend to have a will of your own?

Char. Umh! a little! a small pulse, you know, papa.

[Fawning on Sir Gilb.

Sir Gilb. Ah, the coaxing gipsy! why, you confident, abominable——Odsheart! I could kiss her——

Fran. Faith, do, Sir; that's no breach of your contract.

Sir Gilb. No! no! that's not fair neither; I am to be angry with her——besides I don't keep my word, if I don't speak a good one for him.

Char. That's not in your power, Sir; 'tis impossible any body can give him a good word, at least to me.

Sir Gilb. How! how! will not a handsome young fellow, with an hundred thousand pounds in his pocket, go down with you? Will not a full plumb melt in your mouth, mistress Dainty?

Char. Thank you, Sir; but I don't love trash!

Sir Gilb. Trash! Mr. Witling trash!

Char. A coxcomb.

Sir Gilb. I say he is——

Char. My aversion.

Sir Gilb. Bear witness, Mr. Frankly, she refuses him; you see all I say signifies nothing: but I say again and again, that I am resolved, Madam, you shall marry him, and that articles shall be drawn this very morning.

Char. But do you think you can't persuade him to stay a little, Sir?

Sir Gilb. Stay! yes; yes; a reasonable time, that is.

Char.

Char. You'll think it a reasonable one, I am sure, Sir,
Sir Gilb. Well! well! how long?

Char. Only till I have done hating him, that's all.

Sir Gilb. Pshaw! fiddle faddle! Marry him first, and you'll have time enough to hate him afterwards.

Char. Well, Sir, then I have but one favour to beg of you——

Sir Gilb. Come, what is't, what is't?

Char. Only, Sir, that in the draught of the articles, you will be pleased to leave a blank for the gentleman's name; and if I don't fill it up to your mind, say I know nothing of my own.

Sir Gilb. Fy! fy! you wicked thing you——Mr. Frankly, it will do! it will do! the girl has all her goings! keep her right, keep her right, and tight; and I'll warrant thee all safe, boy.

Fran. Never fear, Sir——now there's but one difficulty behind; were it but possible to make my lady our friend in this matter——

Sir Gilb. Pshaw! waw! never mind! her; am not I master of my own family? Does she not know that my will's a law? and if I once say the word——

Fran. That's true, Sir; but you know, one would not make her a needless enemy: she'll think herself affronted, take it as an insult to her understanding, not to be let into the secret at all.

Char. Indeed, Sir, I am afraid we shall have a foul house, if she is not consulted in the business.

Sir Gilb. Nay, nay, with all my heart, but the foolish woman alway loves to dispute about nothing; and such a spirit of contradiction runs away with her, I had as lief sit in the stocks as talk to her; however, for your private satisfaction——

Fran. Indeed, Sir, I think it will be better so.

Sir Gilb. Well, well, then I'll tell her my resolution instantly.

Char. Ah, poor papa! What a wicked distress have we brought him to! Now will he rather run upon the mouth of a cannon, than let us see he is afraid of gunpowder.

Fran. How my lady will bounce when he mentions it.

[*Aside.*

Sir Gilb. Oh, here's my Lady; I'll speak to her now.

Fran. If you please, we'll retire, that you may have no interruption.

Sir Gilb. Do so, you're right. [*Exeunt Fran. and Char. Enter Lady Wrangle, driving a Maid Servant in before her.*]

L. Wrang. Out of my doors, you dunce! you illiterate monster! What! could you not read? Could not you spell? Where were your eyes, you brainless idiot?

Sir Gilb. Hey-day! hey-day! What's the matter now?

L. Wrang. Go, you eleventh plague of Egypt.

Maid. Indeed, Madam, I did not know it was of any use, it was so blotted and blurred, I took it for waste paper.

L. Wrang. Blurred! you driveler! Was ever any piece perfect, that had not corrections, rasures, interlineations, and improvements? Does not the very original shew, that when the mind is warmest, it is never satisfied with its words?

Incipit, & dubitat; scribit, damnatque tabellas,

Et notat, & delet; mutat, culpatque probatque.

Sir Gilb. Oh, Lord! Now the learned fit's upon her, the devil won't be able to deal with her. [*Aside.*]

L. Wrang. What have you done with it, you dolt-head? Where is it? Fetch it: let me see it, I say.

Sir Gilb. Pray, my Lady Wrangle, what is all this rout about?

L. Wrang. Oh, nothing, to be sure! I am all always unreasonable.

Sir Gilb. Why, look you now, did I say any such thing?

L. Wrang. I don't care if you did.

Sir Gilb. It's very hard a man may not ask a civil question in his own house.

L. Wrang. Ay, do, side with her, take her part; do, do, uphold her in her impudence.

Sir Gilb. Why, my Lady, did I say a word to her?

L. Wrang. Pray, Mr. Wrangle, give me leave to govern my own servants. Don't you know, when I am out of temper, I won't be talk'd to?

Sir Gilb. *Very true, my Lady.*

L. Wrang. Have not I plague enough here, do you think?

Sir Gilb. Why ay, that's true too—Why, you confident jade! how dare you put my lady into such a violent passion?

Maid. Indeed, Sir, I don't know, not I. [*Whimpering.*]

L. Wrang.

L. Wrang. Pray, Mr. Wrangle, meddle with your own business; the fault's to me, and sure I am old enough to correct her myself.

Sir Gilb. Why, what a dickens, may'nt I be of your mind neither? 'Sheart! I can't be in the wrong on both sides.

L. Wrang. I don't know any business you have on either side.

Sir Gilb. Nay, if a man must not speak at all, it's another case.

L. Wrang. Lord! you are strangely teizing—well, come speak—what, what, what is't you would say now?

Sir Gilb. Nay, nothing, not I; I only asked what's the matter?

L. Wrang. I can't tell you, the provocation's too great for words.

Sir Gilb. Well, well, well.

L. Wrang. What here still? Am I to have no account of it then? What have you done with it, you monster?

Maid. Madam, the cook took it out of my hand, as I was coming down stairs with it; he said he wanted it.

L. Wrang. The cook! run, fly, and bid the villain send it me this moment. [Exit Maid.]

Sir Gilb. Why, what the dickins! the senseless jade has not given him a Flanders' lac'd head to boil his cabbage in, has she?

L. Wrang. Pshaw! Do you ever see me concern'd for such trifles?

Sir Gilb. Or has she let the rascal flog his fowls with a bank bill?

L. Wrang. If she had, do you think I would give myself such pain about either?

Sir Gilb. Hah! this must be some abominable thing indeed then.

L. Wrang. The loss, for ought I know, may be irreparable.

Sir Gilb. Oh! then she has lost your diamond necklace, I suppose.

L. Wrang. Pray don't plague me; 'tis impossible to express the wickedness of it.

Sir Gilb. What, the devil! the cook has not got the slut with child, has he?

L. Wrang. Worse ! worse a thousand times !

Sir Gilb. Worse ! What than playing the whore, or thief ? Then the jade has certainly committed murder.

L. Wrang. The most barbarous that ever was —

Sir Gilb. Hoh ! then she has broke pug's neck, to be sure. [*Afide.*]

L. Wrang. The changeling innocent has given that savage beast, the cook, my whole new translation of the passion of Byblis, for waste paper, to be torn or tortur'd to a thousand sordid uses.

Sir Gilb. Nay then —

L. Wrang. And I have not another copy in the world, if it were to save mankind from extirpation.

Sir Gilb. I'm glad on't, with all my heart ; now could I laugh, if I durst, most immoderately. [*Afide.*]

L. Wrang. Now, mistress, have you brought it ?

[*Re-enter Maid.*]

Maid. Madam, the cook says, he has shewer'd it on to the roast-beef, and he can't take it off : he won't burn his meat for nobody, not he, he says.

L. Wrang. Here ! call the footman. He won't ! Bid them drag the rascal hither by the ears, or I'll have them nailed down to the dresser for his impudence — I'll turn the villain out of my house this moment.

[*Exit Maid.*]

Sir Gilb. Come, come, my Lady, don't be in a heat about a trifle ; I am glad to find it's no worse.

L. Wrang. Worse ! had he robb'd the house, and after fired it, I could sooner have forgiven him.

Sir Gilb. Hah ! thank you for that, Madam ; but I should not.

L. Wrang. You ! you should not ! What would be your injury compared with mine ? What I'm concern'd for, the whole learned world, even to posterity, may feel the loss of.

Sir Gilb. Well, well ; have a little patience ; may be she may get it again. And now you talk of posterity, my lady Wrangle, I have some thoughts of marrying my daughter Charlotte ; as for Sophronia, you know —

L. Wrang. I know, that one won't, and t'other shan't marry ; she is a pert forward thing, and has disobligh'd me, and therefore I'll punish her as I think fit. I define you

you won't name her to me, you see I have other things in my head—all greas'd, and burnt to ashes, I suppose.

Sir Gibb. I had better talk to her another time, I believe.

Enter the Maid with the Cook.

L. Wrang. Oh! are you come at last, Sir? Pray, how durst you send me such an impudent answer?

Cook. I did not send an impudent answer, Madam; I only said the meat would be spoil'd: but here she comes, and makes a noise, and a rout, and a clatter about nothing at all—and so every impertinent jade here takes upon her—Oons! a man can't do his business in quiet for them.

L. Wrang. Hold your nonsensical tongue, Sir, and give me the paper I sent for.

Cook. Paper! This is what she gave me:

[Holds it on a skewer, all greasy.]

L. Wrang. Oh my heavens! what a spectacle! not one line legible, though an empire were to purchase it. Look, look, look, you monster!

[Holding him.]

Sir Gibb. So! here will be rare doings.

Cook. Oons! what a life's here about a piece of foul paper?

L. Wrang. A life, you villain! your whole life can't make amends for what you have done. I'll have you beat out of this house, till every bone in your body is broken for this, firrah.

Cook. Beat, Madam! Blood! I won't be beat. I did not come here for that: I'll be out of your house presently; I'll see who will break my bones then; and so there's one of your napkins, Madam: as for your sheet of paper, there's a half-penny for't; and now take your course. I know how to get my wages, I'll warrant you—There's a law for servants as well as other people.

[Exit Cook.]

Sir Gibb. Go, go, mind your business, you silly Tom Lidle you.

L. Wrang. Ay; this is always the effect of your indulgence; no wonder I have no power over them. If you had the least grain of spirit, you would have broke the rascal's head for me.

Sir Gibb. Pshah! there's no occasion for it—let's feel, let's

let's see! [*Takes up the paper.*] Come, come, this matter may be made up without bloodshed still—ay, here; umh! umh!—by the way, I believe this beef's enough, it smells bravely of the gravy.

L. Wrang. What! then I am your jest, it seems.

Sir Gilb. Pooh! pry'thee be quiet; I tell you, I am serious—ay, it's plain to be read still. [*Reads.*]

All a poor maid could do (the gods, I'm sure,

Can tell) I've suffer'd to compleat my cure—Cure!

Ah, poor soul—got the foul disease, I suppose.

L. Wrang. Your obscene comment, Mr. Wrangle, is more provoking than the insolence of your servants: but I must tell you, Sir, I will never eat or sleep in your house more, if that rascal is not turned out of it this moment.

Maid. I hope your Ladyship is not in earnest, Madam.

L. Wrang. What do you prate, Mrs. Minx?

Maid. Indeed, Madam, if John's to be turn'd away, I shan't stay in the family: for though he is sometimes a little hasty to a body, yet I have reason to know he is an honest-hearted man in the main; and I have too much kindness for him to stay in any service, where he is to be abus'd.

L. Wrang. What, you are in love with him, Mrs. Trollop, are you? [*Cuffs bene.*]

Maid. Ods my life! Madam, I won't be struck by n^y body: and if I do love him, what's that to any body; and I don't know why poor folks mayn't be in love as well their betters.

Sir Gilb. Come, come, hold your tongue, hussy.

Maid. Sir, I can't hold my tongue; though I can't say but your worship's a very kind master: but as for my Lady, the devil would not live with her; and so, Madam, I desire you will provide yourself. [*Flings off.*]

Sir Gilb. Odzines, Madam, at this rate I shall have neither dinner to eat, nor bed to lie on. What servants will bear this life, do you think? You have no more temper than a—Why how should a silly wench know what your impertinent poetry was good for?

L. Wrang. Impertinent! I'd have you know, Mr. Ignorant, there's not a line in the whole, that has not the true poetic salt in it.

Sir

Sir Gibb. Well, and now there's English salt in it; and I think the relish of one's as good as t'other.

L. Wrang. Mr. Wrangle, if you have no sense of the soul's diviner faculties, know, I have, and can resent these vulgar insults. You shall find, Sir, that a superior understanding has a proportion'd spirit to support its dignity. Let me have instant reparation, or, by my injured genius, I'll set you house and family in a blaze.

[*Exit L. Wrang.*]

Sir Gibb. Why then blaze and burn by yourself; for I'll go out of the house.

[*Going.*]

Enter Frankly and Charlotte.

Fran. Have you seen my Lady, Sir?

Sir Gibb. Yes, yes, I have seen her—but—I don't know—the—the—

Fran. Don't come into it, I suppose.

Sir Gibb. Umh! no, not readily—in short, the house is all untiled.

Char. Lord, Sir! what filthy thing's this?

[*Seeing the Paper.*]

Sir Gibb. Ay, there's the business—a brat of my Lady's brain, that has got a mischance: that's all.

Fran. Some roasted poetry, I presume.

Sir Gibb. Ay, ay; the, the, the passion of Bible Babble; I don't know what she calls it: but she has been in such a fume here, that half the servants are going to leave the house about it. Charlotte, you can wheedle upon occasion; pry'thee step into the hall, and see if you can make up this matter among them.

Char. I'll do my best, Sir.

[*Exit Char.*]

Fran. Poor Lady! she is a little apt to be over-concerned for her poetry.

Sir Gibb. Concern'd! Oddsblews! if a line on't happens to be mislaid, she's as mad as a blind mare that has lost her foal; she'll run her head against a stone-wall to recover it. All the use I find of her learning is, that it furnishes her with more words to scold with.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Grainger's come, and Mr. Witting.

Sir Gibb. Oh, that's well. Come, Mr. Frankly, let's all go into the dining-room together; mayhap she may be alham'd to be in a passion before company.

Fran.

Fran. At least we may keep her within bounds, Sir.

Sir Gib. You're right! you're right! Ah! it's a very hard case! there's no condition of life without plague and trouble——Why, most people think now I have fortune enough to make ten men of quality happy——

And yet you see how odly things are carried;

'Tis true, I'm worth a million, but I'm married.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T IV.

Granger and Frankly.

FRANKLY.

IN one word, Granger, thou art a very dangerous fellow; 'I did not believe it possible thy blunt humour could have concealed so exquisite a flatterer: why thou art more in my lady's favour in half an hour, than all my art could make me in half a year.

Gran. Have I not always told you, Frankly, that one civil thing from a downright dealer, goes farther than a thousand from a man of general complaisance? 'How do you think I first gain'd credit with Sophronia? Not (as you expected to do it) by an implicit admiration; but the contrary, insolently laughing at her pretending to principles, which I would not allow her capable to comprehend or practise. Now this naturally piqued her into an impatience to mend my opinion of her; so the more difficult I seemed to be convinced of her virtues, the more easy I made it to mend her opinion of me.'

Fran. And if thou hast not done it effectually, I know nothing of the sex: why, she blush'd, man, like a damask rose, when you first came into the room.

Gran. Did not I tell you too, her quarrel and spleen to you would be of service to me?

Fran. O! palpably! I was ready to burst to see her bridle, and smile at me, upon your growing particular to her.

Gran. And what pains she took, to make you observe, that she overlooked you? ha! ha!

Fran. Yes, I did observe, indeed, that the whole dinner-

* dinner-time she was never two minutes without stealing
 * a glance at you.

* *Gran.* O bless me ! I can't bear the insolence of my
 * own imagination ! What a dear confusion will she feel ?
 * What a vermilion shame will spread through all that
 * lovely form——if ever her flesh and blood should hap-
 * pen to mutiny ?

* *Fran.* Which, to tell you the truth, I think it does
 * already ?

Gran. But the misfortune is, I have flatter'd my lady
 into so good a humour, by engaging to make out a fair
 copy of her basted verses there, that I doubt, she won't
 be able to leave me alone with Sophronia.

Fran. Never fear ; her malice is too busy, in setting
 Witling against me, to interrupt you.

Gran. There, indeed, I have some hopes.

Fran. I believe I shall be able to assist them, and in
 part to return the favour you have done me with Sir Gil-
 bert.

Gran. Any thing in my power you may be sure of——
 but see, he's here !

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir Gibb. O ! your servant, gentlemen ; I thought we
 had lost you.

Gran. Your pardon, Sir, we had only a word or two
 in private,

Fran. We were just coming into the company.

Sir Gibb. In troth, I can tell you, the sooner the bet-
 ter : for there's my lady and Charlotte are going to play
 all the game upon us.

Fran. Never fear, Sir ; as long as you have given me
 leave to go Charlotte's halves, she'll make the most of her
 cards, I'll warrant you.

Sir Gibb. I don't know that, but I am sure Witling
 yonder is making the most of his time : his wit, or his
 impudence have got him into such high favour with my
 lady, that she is railing at you like a fury, and crying
 him up for an angel : in short, Charlotte has discovered
 all your affair with her, and has plainly told him you are
 his rival. But it seems, Sir, your pretensions are so
 ridiculous, that they are all three cracking their sides in a
 full chorus of laughing at you.

Fran. Sir, I am obliged to you for your concern ; but in all this, Charlotte is acting no wrong part, I can assure you.

Sir Gilb. No wrong part ! Oddsheart ! I tell you she's coquetting to him, with every wicked limb about her — and is as full of her airs there, as a handsome widow to a young lord in the Lobby, when she has a suit depending in the House of Peers.

Fran. Better still, the more likely to carry her cause, Sir :

Sir Gilb. Carry her cause ! carry her coxcomb, Sir ; for, you'll see, that will be the end on't : she'll be carry'd off herself, Sir. Why, man, he is going to be-leaguer her with a whole army of fidlers yonder ; ' there ' are six coach loads of them now at the door, all stow'd ' fore and aft, with nothing but cases of instruments : ' Such a concourse of cat-guts, you'd swear one of their squalling eunuchs were roasting alive here.

Fran. Believe me, Sir, there is no terror in all this preparation ; ' for since you are pleased to think Mr. ' Granger's security and mine sufficient against any da- ' mage you can suffer from your contract with Witling, ' do you but stand it out stoutly with my lady, and I'll engage to dismount his musical battery with a child's whistle.

Sir Gilb. My lady ! Pshaw waw ? What dost thou talk of her, man ? Why I tell you, I'll put her into a mouse-hole, provided you engage to bring me off with Witling.

Gran. Your security shall be signed the minute it can be drawn, Sir.

Sir Gilb. That's enough ; ' I have ordered my lawyer ' to send his clerk with it, before he brings the deed of ' consent that I am to sign to Witling, : ' but give me leave to tell you again, gentlemen, I really don't understand the girl's way of proceeding all this while.

Fran. Why, Sir——don't you know that Witling is the vainest rogue upon earth.

Sir Gilb. I grant it.

Fran. And consequently, that the pride of outwitting you in your daughter, gives him more pleasure than ' either her person or her portion ?

Sir Gilb. Not unlikely.

Fran.

* *Fran.* And can you think, that from the same natural
 * inference, he would not rather seem to owe his triumph
 * over a rival too, rather to his own merit, than any ac-
 * cident of fortune?

* *Sir Gibb.* I grant you that too.

Fran. Why, Sir, then, if Charlotte were to despise him, we are sure he would then insist upon his bargain; but while she flatters him, and you and I only laugh at him, he may be vain enough to trust his triumph to her choice and inclination only.

* *Sir Gibb.* O! now I begin to take you: so that, if he is rightly handled among us, you propose that Charlotte will be able to coquette him out of his contract.

Fran. Nay, it's her own project, Sir: and I cannot really think we have an ill chance for it at worst: but we must leave it all to her now. In love affairs, you know, Sir, women have generally wiser heads than we.

Sir Gibb. Troth! I don't wholly dislike it; and if I don't handle him roundly on my part—

Gran. Hush! my lady—

Fran. Anon I'll tell tell you more, Sir.

Enter Lady Wrangle and Sophronia.

L. Wrang. Well, Sophronia, since I see this giddy girl is neither to be formed by precept or example; it is at least some consolation, to find her natural inconstancy so effectually mortifies that vile apostate, Frankly.

Soph. Yet I am amazed he should not be more moved at her infidelity.

L. Wrang. You know he's vain, and thinks his merit may sleep in full security. But now! to rouse him from his dream—Oh, Mr. Granger! I am sorry you left us; I am perfectly killed with laughing! There's Mr. Witting has had such infinite humour! He has entertain'd as more than ten comedies.

* *Gran.* O! Pray, Madam, let us go in and participate.

L. Wrang. By no means; he's now alone with his mistress, and 'twould be barbarous to interrupt them.

Gran. His mistress, Madam!

L. Wrang. Ay! with Charlotte; and, you know, lovers so near their happiness are apt to like no company so well as their own.

Fran. D'ye hear, Sir?

[*To Sir Gilb. apart.*

Sir Gilb. I told you how it was.

[*To Fran. apart.*

L. Wrang. Beside, he is to give us a little music; and I think this room will be more convenient.

Gran. He is a fortunate man indeed, Madam, to be so well with the young lady already.

L. Wrang. There's no accounting for that idle passion in uncultivated minds: I am not surpris'd at her forwardness, considering the vulgar education Mr. Wrangle has given her.

Sir Gilb. Odsheart, Madam! don't disparage my girl: she has had a more useful education than your ladyship.

L. Wrang. O! no doubt! she has shewn most hopeful effects on it, indeed! by hanging upon every young fellow's neck, that does but ask her the question.

Fran. Whatever faults Charlotte may have, Madam, I never knew her take pleasure in exposing those of other people.

L. Wrang. O! cry you mercy, Sir; you have great reason to defend her, I don't question: she is a saint in your eye, to be sure.

Fran. Were she weak enough to imagine a superficial learning could make her one, 'tis possible, her failings then, like other people's, might have been more conspicuous.

L. Wrang. What do you mean, Sir?

Fran. I mean, Madam, that as she does not read Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch, or Seneca, she is neither romantic or vain of her pedantry; and as her learning never went higher than Bickerstaff's Tatlers, her manners are consequently natural, modest, and agreeable.

Sir Gilb. Ah! well said Frankly.

[*Aside.*

L. Wrang. Since I am told you were once in love with her, I shall say no more, but leave her own immediate behaviour to confirm your good opinion of her virtues. Ha, ha!

[*Exit.*

Gran. While the lovers of this age, Madam, have so deprav'd a taste, we must not wonder, if our modern fine ladies are apt to run into coquetry: they are now forced to it in their defence; if they don't make advances, they stand as lonely and useless as untenanted houses: so that coquetry, it seems, is no more than setting

• setting a bill upon their door, that lovers in distress
• may read as they pass—Here are night's lodgings to
• be let.

• *L. Wrang.* O! they are most hospitable dames indeed: after this, methinks, the more proper appellation for coquets should be that of landladies.

[*A servant whispers* *L. Wrang.*

• I'll come and give orders myself. [*Exit.*

Soph. I don't know any man alive, that looks upon the degeneracy of mankind with so discerning an eye as Mr. Granger; but I am afraid it will therefore draw him into my misfortune, of being as odious to the illiterate of his sex, as I am to those of mine.

Gran. If that were as just a reason, Madam, for your having a favourable opinion of me, as it is for my perfect admiration of you, we should each of us have still as many friends as any wise man or woman ought to desire.

Fran. Do you mind that, Sir? [*Apart.*

Sir Gilb. A sly rogue! he knows how to tickle her up, I see. [*Apart.*

Soph. And yet the rude world will say, perhaps, that our mutual enmity to them has reduced us to a friendship for one another.

Gran. That's a reproach can never reach you, Madam; so much beauty cannot but have its choice of friends and admirers: a form so bright and perfect, like a comet in the hemisphere, where'er it comes, must set mankind a gazing.

Soph. Fye! Mr. Granger!

Sir Gilb. What, a dickens! will she swallow that blazing star now? [*Apart.*

Fran. Ay, as he has dress'd it, and drink after it too, Sir. [*Apart.*

Soph. I mind not multitudes.

Gran. Pardon me, I know you have a soul above them; and I really think it the misfortune of your person, to have been so exquisitely fair, that where your virtue would preserve, your eyes destroy; they give involuntary love; where'er you pass, in spite of all your innocence, they wound—*Juvenumque prodis publica cura.*

Soph. Alas! my eyes are turn'd upon myself: 'and so
• little do I mind the follies of other people, that I sometimes

THE REFUSAL.

‘ times find myself alone in the midst of a public circle.
Gran. I cannot wonder at that, Madam, since our best
 ‘ assemblies are generally made up of illiterate beings, that
 ‘ when they are alone, find themselves in the worst com-
 ‘ pany, and so are reduced to come abroad, though mere-
 ‘ ly to meet, and hate one another.’

Soph. What charms, then, can you suppose I could
 have for a world, that has so few for me? Beside, at most,
 the men of modern gallantry gaze upon a woman of real
 virtue, only as atheists look into a fine church, from curio-
 sity, not devotion: ‘ they may admire its ornaments and
 ‘ architecture; but have neither grace nor faith for far-
 ‘ ther adoration.’

Gran. All men are not infidels; of me, at least, you
 have a convert: and tho’ the sensual practice of the
 world had made me long despair of such perfection in a
 mortal mold; yet when the rays of truth celestial broke
 in upon my sense, my conscious heart at once confess’d
 the deity; I prostrate fell a proselyte to virtue; and
 now its chaste desires enlarge my soul, and raise me to se-
 raphic joy.

Soph. Harmonious sounds, celestial transports! [*Aside.*

Sir Gibb. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! was ever such a wicked
 thief? Oddheart, he’ll make her go to prayers with him,
 presently! [*Aside.*

Soph. No more; we are observed. These heaven-born
 emanations of the soul desire not vulgar ears. Some fitter
 time may offer—till when——

Gran. Till then, be hush’d our joys,
 [*Gran. leaves her, and joins the men, while Soph. walks
 apart, musing.*

Soph. Our joys, indeed! Such was, in Paradise, our first
 parents’ joy, before they fell from innocence to shame.

Gran. [*To Gran.*] Why did you not go on with her?
 We thought you were in a fine way. Sir Gilbert and I
 were just going to steal off.

Gran. Soft and fair, Sir. A lady of her delicacy must
 be carried, like a taper new-lighted, gently forward; if
 you hurry her, out she goes.

Sir Gibb. You’re right, you’re right. Now you shall
 see me manage her a little: I’ll speak a good word for you
 —-hum—

Gran.

Gran. Hush ! not for the world, Sir——Death, you'll spoil all ! Don't you see she is in contemplation ?

Sir Gib. What if she be, man ? We must not humour her till she is stark mad, neither. Sophronia, how dost thou do, child ?

Soph. [*Repeating.*]———The earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill :
Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours, from the juicy shrub
Disporting——

Sir Gib. Very pretty, I protest ; very pretty. These amorous scraps of fancy in thy head, make me hope that love is not far from thy heart, Sophy.

Soph. Love, Sir, was ever in my heart ; but such a love, as the blind Homer of this British isle, in rhymeless harmony, sublimely sings——

Sir Gib. Well, and, pr'ythee, what does he say of it ?

Soph.———Love refines
The thought, and heart enlarges ; has his seat
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale,
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend.

Sir Gib. Very good again ; and troth, I'm glad to hear thou art so heartily reconciled to it.

Soph. Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring——

Sir Gib. Ah ! there, I doubt, we are a little crazy. [*Aside.*]

Soph. This iron age, so fraudulent and bold,
Touch'd with this love, would be an age of gold.

Sir Gib. Oh, lud ! Oh, lud ! this will never do. [*Aside.*]

Gran. So, she has given the old gentleman his belly-full ; I see. Well, Sir, how do you find her ?

Sir Gib. Ah, poor soul, piteous bad ! all upon the tativity again ! You must e'en undertake her yourself ; for I can do no good upon her. But here comes love of another kind.

Enter Charlotte, Witling, and Lady Wrangle.

Char. Oh, sister ! here's Mr. Witling has writ the prettiest cantata, sure, that ever made music enchanting.

Soph. I am glad, sister, you are reconciled to any of his performances.

Wit. Oh, fie! Madam, the only rathica——A mere trifle.

Fran. That I dare swear it is.

Wit. Ha, ha! no doubt on't; if you could like it, it must be an extraordinary piece, indeed, Tom. You see, my little rogue, we have crabbed him already,!

[Aside, to Char.]

L. Wrang. Mr. Frankly is a mere modern critic, that makes personal inclination the rule of his judgment; but to condemn what one never saw, is making short work, indeed.

Fran. With submission, Madam, I can see no great rashness in presuming that a magpye can't sing like a nightingale.

Wit. No, nor an owl look like a peacock, neither. Ha, ha!

L. Wrang. and Char. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Wrang. Perfectly pleasant.

Char. Oh, wit to an infinity!

Fran. Much good may do you with your Canary-bird, Madam.

[To Char.]

Char. Oh, Sir, I am sorry you are exhausted! but when wit is upon the lee, no wonder it runs into rudeness.

Fran. I don't wonder at my not hitting your taste, Madam, when such stuff as this can go down with you.

Wit. My stuff, dear Tom, was composed purely for the entertainment of this lady; and since she likes it, I will allow, that you, of all mankind, have most reason to find fault with it. Ha, ha!

Char. Nay, if he should like it, even I will then give it up to the world as good for nothing.

Fran. Then it's in danger, I can tell you, Madam; for I shall certainly like it; because I am sure it will be good for nothing.

Char. A pleasant paradox.

Fran. None at all, Madam; for since I find your heart is, like stock, to be transferred upon a bargain, it will be some pleasure, at least, to see the grossness of your choice revenge me on your infidelity.

Wit.

Wit. Poor Tom! What, are the grapes sour, my dear? Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Pshaw! never mind him. The cantata, dear Mr. Witling, the cantata.

L. Wrang. Oh, by all means! Pray oblige us, Sir.

Wit. Immediately, Madam; but all things in order. First give me leave to regale the good company with a small trifling instrumental.

L. Wrang. As you please, Sir.

Wit. Hey, Signor Carbonelli! *Vi piace d'intrare?*

[*The music enters.*]

L. Wrang. Mr. Granger, won't you please to sit?

Sir Gilb. Ay, ay, come, gentlemen; but, in earnest, does this puppy really pretend to sing?

Fran. Much as he pretends to wit, Sir; he can make a noise, at least.

Sir Gilb. But the whelp has no voice.

Fran. Oh, Sir, that's out of fashion! Your best masters seldom have any.

Sir Gilb. Then I would not give a fig for their music, Sir; I would as lief see a cripple dance. But let's hear what the fiddles can do. [*They play a sonata.*]
Well, and what, we are to suppose this is very fine, now, ha?

Fran. No doubt on't, Sir; at least it will not be safe to say the contrary.

Sir Gilb. Well, well, for a quiet life, then, very fine let it be; but I wish I could hear a Lancashire horn-pipe for all that.

L. Wrang. Come, dear Sir, no more apologies.

[*To Witling.*]

Gran. See, Sir, Mr. Witling is going to entertain us.

Sir Gilb. Ay, that must be rare stuff indeed.

Wit. Upon my life, Madam, I have no more voice than a kettle-drum; beside, this is for a treble, and out of my compass.

Char. Oh, no matter? feign it, dear Mr. Witling.

Wit. I would fain oblige you, Madam; but yet, methinks, nothing done to please you should be feign'd, neither, Madam.

Fran. Ha! He would fain be witty, I see; but don't trouble yourself, Madam; he has as much mind to sing

as

‘ as you have to hear him : tho’, Heaven knows, his voice
 ‘ is like his modesty, utterly forced ; nature has nothing
 ‘ to do with either of them.

‘ *Wit.* Whatever my modesty is, dear Tom, thy uneasiness I am sure is natural ; that comes from thy heart,
 ‘ I dare answer for it. Ha, ha, ha !

‘ *Fran.* Oh, thou happy rogue !’

Wit. But, Madam, if I sing, you shall promise me to dance, then.

Char. Oh, any composition ! I’ll do it with all my heart.

L. Wrang. But the words ‘ first, dear Sir, read them out.’

Wit. Well, ladies, since you will have it——

Sir Gilb. He is a curled while about it, methinks——

Wit. You must know, then, this cantata is of a different species from the passion generally expressed in our modern operas ; for there you see your lover usually approaches the fair lady with sighs, tears, torments, and dying. Now ; here I shew you the way of making love like a pretty fellow ; that is, like a man of sense, all life, and gaiety——

As for example——

Char. Pray, mind.

Wit. [*Reading.*]

Thus to a pensive swain,
 Who long had lov’d in vain,
 Thyrsis, the secret arts
 Of gaining hearts
 From cold disdain,
 To his despairing friend imparts.

So far recitative—Now for the air—A hum, hum !

‘ *Soph.* Don’t you think, Mr. Granger, that the double dative cases of “ to a pensive swain, to his despairing friend,” almost reduce this to nonsense ?

‘ *Gran.* Justly observed, Madam ; but, you know, nonsense and harmony are reconciled of late.’

Wit. Would you woo her

With success ?

Up to her,

Pursue her

With life and address.

If

If gay,
Shew her play;
If colder,
Be bolder:

Now seize her,
And teize her,
And kiss her,
And please her;
Till ripe for the joy,
You warm her,
Alarm her,
Disarm her,
You charm her,
I warrant thee, boy.

Part II.

But so, pine and languish,
Or sigh your anguish
To the air,
Is fruitless pain,
Ender'd in vain:
Silent wags, and looks of care,
Will never, never win the fair.

End with the first strain,

Ah, you little rogue!

[To Charlotte.]

L. Wrang. Infinitely pretty! 'Nothing, sure, was ever
' so musical.

' *Char.* Sing it, sing, it, dear Mr. Witling. I am on
' tiptoe to hear it.

' *Wit.* Well, Madam, if you can bear it in a falsetto.
[He sings.]

' *Char.* O caro! caro!

' *Wit.* Anima mia——

Soph. [To Gran,] How happy are the self-conceited!
' and yet, if he had not sung, now, this wretch's folly
' and ignorance had been less conspicuous.

' *Gran.* Right, Madam; but, you know, a man must
' have variety of parts, to make an accomplished cox-
' comb.

' *Soph.*

Soph. I scarce think poetry is more abused than music, by its vain pretenders.

Gran. And yet it is hard to say, Madam, whether those pretenders, or the false taste of our modern admirers, have more contributed to the abuse of either.

Wit. But come, Madam, now your promise; 'your airs only' [*To Char.*] can give a *bonne bouche* to our entertainment.

Char. Well, since I gave my word, I'll use no ceremony.

Soph. 'What, more folly?' I grow tired. Shall we walk into my library? There we may raise our thoughts.

Gran. You charm me, Madam; I thirst, methinks, for a clear draught of Helicon.

Soph. Take no leave, but follow me. [*Ex. Soph. & Gr.*]

Wit. '*E ben sonate.*' [*Charlotte dances.*] '*Eb! viva! viva!*' All enchantment, Madam! no ten thousand angels ever came up to it.

L. Wrang. It cannot be denied but Charlotte has an external genius; she wants no personal accomplishments; but 'tis great pity the application they have cost her, was not laid out upon the improvement of her understanding.

Wit. Oh, pardon me, Madam! as long as there is a good understanding between her and me, what matter's which of us has it, you know.

Sir Gibb. Ay, but there's the question, which of you 'tis that has it; for if one of you has it, I am sure you two will never come together.

Fran. Well said! at him, Sir.

[*Aside.*]

Wit. Look you, Sir Gilbert; you may fancy your fair daughter and I are a couple of fools, if you please; but if one of us had not been wiser than the father, we could never have had a right to come together, in spite of his teeth, that's certain. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Wrang. Pardon me, Mr. Witling, you under-rate your merit; for you had been sure of my consent without your contract.

Wit. Ay, Madam, that was only a foolish modesty that I could not shake off; therefore I hope you will excuse me, if durst not think merit alone was a sufficient bait to bob Sir Gilbert out of his consent. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Gibb. You are a very merry grig, Sir; but have a care you are not bobb'd yourself. Stay till you win, before you laugh; for you are not yet married, I presume.

Wit.

Wit. Why no, nor you have not supped yet; yet I hold gold to silver, we both eat before we sleep.

Sir Gilb. Why! dost thou think the girl is in haste to marry thee to night!

Wit. I don't say that neither: but, Sir, as long as I have a sufficient deposit of the lady's inclinations, to answer for the rest of her premises, you will give me leave not to be afraid of her looking out for a new chap in the mean time, Sir.

Sir Gilb. A deposit! why wouldst thou persuade me the girl can be fool enough to like thee?

Wit. 'Egad, I don't know how it is, but she has wit enough, it seems, to make me think so—but if you won't take my word, let her answer for herself.

Sir Gilb. Ay, that I would be glad to hear.

Wit. Ha, ha! 'Egad, this is a pleasant question indeed—Madam, are not you willing, (as soon as the church-books can be open) to make a transfer of your whole stock of beauty for the conjugal uses of your humble servant?

Char. Indeed, papa, I won't suppose that can be a question.

Wit. A hum! your humble servant, Sir.

Char. Beside, are not you obliged to sign a further deed of consent to Mr. Witling?

Sir Gilb. Yes, child; but the same deed reserves to you a right of refusal, as well as to him.

Char. That I understand, Sir; and there's one can witness for whom I have reserved that right of refusal.

[Pointing to Fran.]

Wit. Your humble servant, again, Sir; ha, ha, ha!

L. Wrang. I am amazed, Mr. Wrangle, you could think she could be under the least difficulty in the choice.

Fran. And yet, Madam, there are very innocent ladies, that have made a difficulty of changing their inclinations in half an hour.

L. Wrang. A woman of strict virtue, Sir, ought to have no inclinations at all: or, if any, those only of being obedient to the will of her parents.

Wit. Ob, let him alone, Madam; the more he rails, the more I shall laugh, depend upon't: the pain of a rival is the pleasantest game in the world: his wishing me at the devil, is just the same thing as if he wished me joy! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Gibb. Well, Sir, altho I shall say, is, that if the girl has common sense, thy contract must still be good for nothing.

Wit. Right! and if you had common sense, I am sure you would never have made it; not but to do you justice, Sir Gilbert, I must own you have wit in your way too; though it's of a very odd turn, I grant you.

Sir Gibb. Sir, I disown my pretensions to any, if ever you had sense enough to find it out.

Wit. Sure you forget, my dear Sir Gilbert. Don't you remember once I did find it out? Did not I slyly catch you in St. What-de-callum's churchyard, with your table book, taking dead people's names from the tomb-stones, to fill up your list of your third subscription, that you might be sure of those that would never come to claim it? and then pretended to all your friends you were full? There, at least, you had more wit to keep people out, than any man living had to get in: for I grant you, your list was dead sure! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Gibb. Why, ay, this nonsensical story now passes for wit, I warrant, among your cockade and velvet sparks at Garraway's; but much good may do you with your jest, as long as we have your money among us: I believe it will be no hard matter to bite most of your soft heads off before it be long; and if you drive on as you seem to do, we shall make bold to set some of you down where we took you up, edheartlikins.

Wit. Nay, I grant you, to do your own business, you must do other peoples too; but if all the young fellows of dress and pleasure would follow me, I would undertake to lead you a dance for all that.

Sir Gibb. And, pray, what would you have them do!

Wit. Why, do as you do: nothing that you pretend to do; or do as I did, every thing as you whispered me not to do. I minded what your broker did, not what you said, my dear! And if every gentleman would but buy, when you advise him to sell; or sell when you advise him to buy, 'twould be impossible to go out of the way: why, 'tis as plain road, man, as from Hyde-Park corner to Kensington.

Sir,

Sir Gibb. Sir, you take a great deal of liberty with me; infomuch, that I must tell you, I am not sure I won't pay the forfeit of my contract, rather than part with my daughter to a coxcomb—and so take it as you will.

L. Wrang. Mr. Wrangle! what do you mean by this brutality?

Fran. Mr. Witting, Madam, will take nothing ill, that I think fit to justify, I am sure.

Wit. No, faith! you need not fear it; I'll marry before I'll fight, depend upon't. Ha, ha!

L. Wrang. Mr. Witting, I beg you come away this moment—I'll undertake to do your merit justice. I'll see who dares pretend to govern in this family beside myself. Charlotte, give him your hand—Come, Sir—

[*Exit Lady Wrangle.*]

Wit. I am all obedience, Madam—your humble servant, Mr. Frankly——“Would you woo her——”

[*Exit, singing with Charlotte.*]

Fran. Admirably well done, Sir!—“you have worked his insolence to rare order.” Now, if you can but stand it out as stoutly with my lady, our business is done.

Sir Gibb. If!—Will you stand by me?

Fran. Will you give me your authority, Sir, to handle her roundly, and make her know who ought to be her master?

Sir Gibb. My authority! ay, and thanks into the bargain—Come along, I'll send for the lawyer now—Mr. Frankly, my blood rises at her; she shall find I'll vindicate the honour of the city, and, from this moment, demolish her petticoat government.

Fran. Well said; I'll warrant you, Sir. [*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

Sir Gilbert and Frankly.

SIR GILBERT.

MY dear Frankly, I could not rest till I had thee alone again; thou hast gained upon me for ever: your vindicating the husband's authority, and taking my
G wife

wife a peg lower before my face, has tickled my fancy to that degree, that, odzooks! I could wish in my heart thou hadst been married to her.

Fran. Oh, I should be loth to have robbed you, Sir, of that happiness.

Sir Gibb. A hum! you are right, you are right; I did not think of that indeed. Well; it's a very odd thing now, that a wife will sooner be kept under by any man than her husband: why the deuce can't I govern her so?

Fran. There's no great secret in the matter, Sir; for take any couple in Christendom, you will certainly find, that the more troublesome of the two is always head of the family.

Sir Gibb. By my troth, I believe you are right; and since the war is begun, I'll make a fair push for't. I am resolved now to thwart her in every thing; and if Granger has but wit enough to talk Sophronia into her senses; that is, if he can but convince her that she is flesh and blood, and born to breed, like other women; odzooks! he shall marry her immediately: I'll plague her Ladyship that way too.

Fran. That way! Oh, ay, its true: for I think I have heard you say, Sir, that if either of your daughters die unmarried, my Lady is to inherit their fortunes.

Sir Gibb. Ay, ay; there the shoe pinches, man; she would be as much an enemy to Granger, as she is to you, if she could in the least suspect he would ever make any thing of it with Sophronia.

Fran. And, if I don't mistake, Sir, Granger is in a fair way there too; for, to my knowledge, he has been locked up with her this half hour, here in her library.

Sir Gibb. The dickens!

Fran. Did not you observe them steal off together, just before the music?

Sir Gibb. I wondered, indeed, what was become of them; by the Lord Harry I am glad of it—I must have a peep at them. [*Goes to the key-hole.*] Odso! they are just a coming forth.

Fran. We had best be out of the way then, that we may not disturb them.

Sir Gibb. No, no, I'll warrant you: pr'ythee, let us stand 'behind this screen,' and observe what passes.

Fran.

Fran. Quick! quickly then; here they come.

[*They retire.*]

Enter Granger with Sophronia.

Soph. Oh, Granger! still preserve this purity,
And my whole soul will open to receive thee:
Forget, like me, thy sex, how sweetly may
We pass our days in rational desire!

‘Thou seest, I own, without a blush, my love,
For blushes only rise from guilty flames;
When conscience driven, reluctant to the crime,
Leaps to the face, and marks the cheek with shame:
But the chaste heart sublim’d by purer fires,
Knowing no conscious fear, reserve, or guile,
Gives, with unbounded frankness, all its store,
And only blushes—that it gives no more.’

Gran. Hear this, ye bright immortal choirs above,
And own that human souls, like you, can love.

Sir Gib. Heyday! this is downright love in a tragedy! Well; he’s a comical thief.

‘*Fran.* Hush! let him go on, Sir.

‘*Soph.* Can you forgive the tedious banishment,
Which my distrust and dread impos’d on you?

‘*Gran.* Can I reproach you for so just, so kind
A fear? While through the general race of man,
A sensual and infectious passion rages,
Giving, from sex to sex, the mortal tainture;
Can I complain, if, to preserve yourself
From the contagion, you’ve perhaps enjoin’d
The healthy to perform his quarantine?
But landing thus, upon my native soil,
I leave my sufferings past behind, and think
The present now is all that’s left of time,
Or worth my care.

‘*Soph.* Blush! blush! ye base degenerate world,
That boast the bliss of gross connubial love:
Can you wear human forms, yet see the prone,
The brute creation equal your desires?
Had you or souls or sense refin’d, you’d form
Your wishes worthy your superior being;
Curb, with imperial reason, lawless nature,
And reach, like us, the joys of love seraphic.’

Gran. Oh, harmony of heart! Oh, spotless passion!

Here, on this hand, the altar of my vows,
I offer up my purer part, my soul
To thine, and swear inviolable——

Soph. ———— Hold!

Passions, like ours, no formal vows require;
For vows suppose distrust, or faithless love,
The frail security of sensual flames;
But where the pure, with the pure soul unites.

The simple hand, thus given, and receiv'd, suffices.

Gran. Let then this hand my spotless heart resign.

Soph. Thus in exchange I blend my soul with thine.

Sir Gib. So; they are got to hand and heart already;
but now, now for a touch at the rest of her premises.

Fran. Nay, dear Sir, be easy.

Sir Gib. Well! well! I will.

Soph. And now, no more Sophronia, but thy friend,
Be both my name and sex from hence forgotten.

Gran. No:

Let me remember still that thou art fair;

For were there no temptation in thy beauty,

Where were the merit of such hard resistance?

Indeed, my friend, 'tis hard! 'tis hard resistance!

'The organs of my sight, my ear, my feeling,

'As I am made of human mold, in spirit

'Of me, exert their functions, and are pleas'd;

I view thee with delight, I hear with transport,

And thy touch——is rapture——

Soph. How fares my friend?

Gran. Like the poor wretch that parches in a fever,
With fatal thirst, yet begs for present ease

To drink, and die——

Soph. From whence this new disorder?

Gran. Tell me, Sophronia, is my virtue blameful;

Because my senses act as nature bids them?

Am I in fault, if the sharp winter's frost

Can chill my limbs, or summer's sun will scorn them?

What matter can resist the elements?

Rivers will freeze, and solid mountains burn;

What bodies will not change?——Thus the tall oak——

'Though from our meaner flames secure,

'Must that, which falls from heaven, endure.

Soph. Where has he learned this art of unoffending
flattery?

[*Aside.*

Gran.

Gran. Canst thou reproach me then, if while thy beauties

- With such a blaze of charms invade my sense,
- My human heart's not proof against their pow'r ?
- *Soph.* Reproach thee ! No ; bodies are but the shells,
- Or huts, that cover in the soul, and are,
- Like other fabrics, subject to mischance :
- The cells of hermits may be fir'd ; but none
- Reproach the wretch that suffers by the flame.

Gran. Oh, Sophronia ! canst thou forgive me then,
That my material dross thus burns before thee ?
That my whole frame thus kindles at thy beauty ?
And even warms my soul with fond desire ?

- Like an impatient child it languishes,
- And pines for wants unknown, it sighs, it pants,
- To be indulg'd upon thy friendly bosom,
- To fold thee in my tender arms, to talk,
- And gaze, with mutual soft benevolence
- Of eyes, as giving were our only pleasure.

Sir Gib. Adod ! I believe he's in earnest, he makes me half in love to hear him.

Soph. Is it possible ? Can then
Such softness mingle with corporeal passion ? [*Apart.*]

Gran. But while the soul alone is suffered to
Possess, and bars my mortal part from joy ;
My poor repining senses murmur at
Their fate, and call thy purity unjust,
• To starve the body, while the mind knows plenty,
• Yet, like a churl, ingrosses whole the feast.
• My senses claim a share from nature's law ;
• They think, with a more melting softness, they
• Could love, and e'en inform the soul with rapture."

Sir Gib. Ay ; now we begin to work her.

- *Gran.* Consider then, as part of me, thy friend,
- Thy friend may sure be trusted with your pity !
- Oh, relieve them ! give me some sign at least,
- One kind embrace, or a chaste sister's kiss,
- In certain proof that thou art still my friend,
- That yet thou hat'st me not—I ask no more.

Soph. *Pignora certa petis? do pignora certa—Timendo.*

Gran. Does then thy fear alone refuse me ? Oh,
Sophronia !

Why, why must virtue be a sin for to nature?
 Why set our senses with our souls at variance,
 As Heav'n had form'd thee fair—to kill thy friend.

Soph. What means my throbbing heart? Oh, virtue!
 Now save me from unequal nature's power! Now,
 Now guard me from myself—and hide my shame!

Gran. Must I then perish? Will my friend forsake me?

Soph. Oh, Granger! I am lost!—thou hast undone
 I am fallen, and thou wilt hate me now. [Exit]

Gran. Oh, Sophronia!

Soph. —Lead me thy arm, support me!
 Thy melting plaints have stole upon my heart,
 And soften me to wishes never known before.

Gran. Oh, the tumultuous joy! [*She sinks into his arms.*]

Sir Glib. Ah, dead! dead! We have her, boys! we
 have her.

Gran. See how she pants!

How, like a wounded dove, she beats her wings,

And trembling hovers to her mate for succour.

Oh, the dear confusion! Awake, Sophronia!

Now wake to new and unconceiv'd delights,

Which faint philosophy could never reach,

Which nature gave thee charms to taste and give.

Soph. Oh, I cou'd wish, methinks, for ev'ry power,

That might have charms for thee: thy words,

Like Hybla drops, distil upon my sense,

And I could hear thee talk for ever.

Gran. Oh, be but thus for ever kind, thy eyes

Will find new subjects for eternal talk,

And everlasting love: blush not, my fair,

That thou art kind: thy heart has only paid

To love, the tribute due from nature's whole creation:

For wisdom to his power oppos'd, is folly:

Hear how the British Virgil sings his sway;

“Thus every creature, and of every kind,

The secret joys of mutual passion find;

Not only man's imperial race, but they

That wing the liquid air, or swim the sea,

Or haunt the desert, rush into the flame;

For love is lord of all, and is in all the same.”

[*Exeunt Gran. and Soph.*]

Sir

Sir Gib. Oh, rare philosophy! Oh, fine philosophy! dainty philosophy! ho!

Fran. Ha, ha, ha! that must be a pleasant sort of philosophy indeed, Sir, that pretends to be wiser than nature. Platonic love is a mere philosopher's stone; when different sexes once come to lay their heads together about it, the projection's sure to fly *in fumo*.

Sir Gib. *Fumo*! Ay, I warrant you. A handsome wench, that shuts herself up two or three hours with a young fellow, only out of friendship, is making a hopeful experiment in natural philosophy indeed. Why it's just like spreading a bag of gunpowder before a great fire, only to dry it; ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Right, Sir—it puts me in mind of the French soldier, who, to steal powder out of a full barrel, cunningly bored a hole in it with a red hot poker.

Sir Gib. Ah, very good! ha, ha, ha! As you say, it's hard luck indeed, that her first touch of his hand should blow up all the rest of her body.

Fran. But to do her justice, Sir, she was not won without a good deal of art neither: a plain battery of love would have done nothing upon her; you see, he was forced to sap her with his self reproaches, and put it all upon the point of her compassion to his senses.

Sir Gib. Nay, the toad did worm her nicely, that I must needs say.

Fran. Ha, ha, ha! what a rare welcome too this news will have with my Lady! How she will fume at the disappointment!

Sir Gib. Nay, I have nothing to do with that, you know; this was none of my doing: let every tub stand upon its own bottom; I shall e'en leave her Ladyship to his management: all I can promise him is, not to hinder the matter.

Fran. That's all he will desire, I dare say, Sir: be you but as a passive in his affair as mine, I'll warrant we will find courage enough between us to maintain our pretensions.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's Mr. Delay, the lawyer.

Sir Gib. Odio! that's well! Now, Mr. Frankly—

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Fran. I believe, Sir, you had best keep him out of my Lady's fight; till matters are ripe for execution.

Sir Gibb. You are right, you are right; say no more, I'll do it. *Ab, the sly rogue! how he tickled her up!*

Fran. But barkee, barkee, Sir Gilbert—don't flinch now; don't be a craven; be sure to stand it out stoutly with my Lady.

Sir Gibb. Will you and Granger continue to stand by me?

Fran. To the last drop of our amorous blood to your daughters, and our amiable blood to you.

Sir Gibb. Why then, if I don't squabble it out with her Ladyship to the last drop of a husband's authority, may I live and die the cock of the hen-peck'd corporation.

[Exit.

Fran. So; thus far we stand fair: we have nothing now to combat but my Lady; and Granger's success with Spphronia, at this time, will naturally strengthen our alliance against her. As for my friend Witting, his own assurance and vanity will partly do his business: 'but, however, in the mean while, it will not be amiss to keep him warm and ripe for our design'—à-propos! here he comes.

Enter Witting.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha! dear Tom! I am glad I have found thee, faith! I have a favour to beg of thee.

Fran. Why then, I am glad you have found me too—because, I believe, I shall not grant it.

Wit. Ha, ha! what crabbed still, my dear! But I come to thee from a fair lady, child; and 'tis for her sake I am going to be obliged to thee.

Fran. I am glad of that too. A woman of sense, I warrant her, by her sending thee on a fool's errand.

Wit. Ay, but my dear! the errand happens to be her's now; and so thou hast civilly put the fool upon the woman of sense. Good again! one of thy old blunders, Tom! for, I think thou hast but curied luck in making thy way to the women.

Fran. When you tell me the lady you come from, I shall be better able to guess, whether she takes me or you for a fool.

Wit. Suppose then it were from a lady, Tom, that designs

signs to take either you or me for a husband? What dost thou think of my little Charlotte, my dear Tommy?

Fran. Why, if she takes thee for a husband, I shall think her a fool; and if I should take thee for a wit, she would think me a fool: but by her sending thee to ask a favour of me, it's a sign she thinks thee a fool.

Wit. Ha, ha! a very pretty parcel of cross purposes; a fool and wit, and wit and fool; and she, and thee, and me! What! art thou playing at hide-and-seek with thy words, child? Thou dost not expect I should take all thy jingle jumble for wit, dost thou?

Fran. No, faith! if it be wit, I expect thou shouldst not take it.

Wit. With all my heart—Come, come, it shall be wit then; I will mistake it for once.—But to business—the fair lady, my dear Tom—

Fran. Ay, what of her?

Wit. Why, poor soul, she desir'd me to come to you, and—

Fran. And leave her to better company, ha!

Wit. Look you, Tom, I know least ought to have leave to speak, and therefore, at present, you shall have all the wit to yourself, my dear: but don't be uneasy at my happiness, dear Tom; for to tell you the crux, the creature is so cursed fond of me, that she begins to grow troublesome already. Ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Why don't you make yourself easy then, and give her up to me?

Wit. No no; I must not break the poor fool's heart neither: for you must know, she is in a terrible taking about me.

Fran. How so, Sir?

Wit. Why she said, just now, she was afraid to marry me so soon as to-night upon thy account.

Fran. Good! then there may be hopes she will not marry thee upon any account.

Wit. No, don't flatter thyself neither, my dear Tommy; for her concern at the bottom was all upon my account.

Fran. How does that appear?

Wit. Why you know, says she, after all poor Frankly has some sort of pretensions to me: I don't know how it was

was, says she; but some way or other he got in with my father: so I durst not wholly discourage his addresses. Now, Frankly's of a surly temper, 'says she? and, 'if I should marry you, in the heat of his disappointment, he may say or do some rash thing upon't:' and I know, says she, Mr. Witling, you are violent in your nature too; and if matters should rise to a quarrel, nobody knows where the mischief may end; the world will certainly lay it all at my door—I should be the miserablest creature alive—therefore I beg you, says she, go to him from me, and try to make an amicable end of the business; and the moment poor Frankly's made easy, says she, I'll marry you the next hour, without any reserve in the whole world.

Fran. Why then, without any reserve in the whole world, pray tell the lady, that she may depend upon it I am certainly easy—because I am sure she imposes upon you.

Wit. Impose upon me, child! ha, ha! that's pleasant enough, ha, ha!

Fran. That is, she let's you impose upon yourself, which is the same thing.

Wit. That may be, Tom; but the devil take me if I can find it out: 'but, however, I am mighty glad you do, because then I am sure, as long as you are easy, you can't take it ill, if I should burst my ribs with laughing at your fancy.

Fran. Oh, not in the least! and to increase your mirth, Sir, I will be farther bold to tell you, she has as hearty a contempt for you, if possible, as I have.

Wit. Good again! Ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Thou art a thing so below all human consideration, thou hast not wherewithal to give a Spaniard jealousy.

Wit. Ah, poor Tom, if thou didst but know all now! Ha, ha!

Fran. But to think thyself agreeable to her, thou must have the impudence of a French Harlequin.

Wit. Ah, dear Tom, thou charimest me! for since I find thou art not, in the least, uneasy at her engagement with me, to tell thee the truth. I have nothing at present that can possibly retard my happiness.

Fran.

Fran. Why then, Sir, be as happy as you deserve; and pray let the lady know, as to any favour she designs you, I am in perfect peace of mind and tranquillity.

Wit. And you really give me leave to tell her so?

Fran. Tell her, I am more easy than she herself will be, when she has married you.

Wit. Why then' perish me, if thou art not one of the best-bred rivals in the whole world! ha, ha, ha! and here she comes, faith, to thank thee for her part of the consolation. Ha, ha!

Fran. Ha, ha!

Enter Charlotte.

Char. So, gentlemen, I am glad to find you in such good humour.

Wit. O! Madam, the dearest friends in the world: I have obey'd your commands, and here's honest Tom is so far from being uneasy at our marriage, that 'egad I can't get him to believe it will ever come to any thing.

Char. O! as to that, Mr. Frankly may think as he pleases; but if he is not uneasy upon your account, that's all I pretend to desire of him.

Wit. No, no, honest Tom will give us no trouble, depend upon it.

Fran. Not I, upon my honour, Madam, 'for though I might be provoked to cut another man's throat, that should pretend to you, yet the value I have for Mr. Witling, secures him from my least resentment.

Wit. Look you there, Madam! you see your fears are all over; I don't find we have any thing to do now, but to send for the parson.

Char. Ay, but I don't well understand him; for he seems to be neither jealous of your merit, nor any inclination: and that I can scarce think possible.

Fran. You may, upon my soul, Madam: for I have so just a sense of both, that if it had not been in regard to your father's contract, I am convinced you would never have endured the sight of him.

Wit. Ah! poor Tom! he has much ado to smother it.

[Apart.]

Char. Very pretty! so you think that my admitting his addresses is mere grimace, and that I am all this while taking pains only to deceive Mr. Witling.

Fran. Alas! you need not do that, Madam; he takes so much

much to deceive himself, he really gives you no trouble about it.

Wit. You see, child, we may put any thing upon him.

Char. Right! you take it as I could wish! Let me alone with him. And so, Sir, you really expect I should be pleased with your having this free opinion of my conduct?

Fran. I must be pleased with every thing you undertake in my favour, Madam.

Wit. How vain the rogue is too! [Aside.

Char. I am amazed! but how naturally a coxcomb shows himself. [Aside.

Wit. Ay, that's when he is in your hands, Madam;

Ha, ha! 'Egad she plays him nicely off. [Aside.

Char. After this, one should wonder at nothing! Nay, there are some fools, I see, whose vanity is so far from being offensive, that they become diverting even to a rival.

Fran. Mr. Witling is always entertaining, Madam.

Wit. Hah, prodigious! 'Egad he thinks you mean me all this while. Ha, ha, ha! [Apart.

Char. Well, sure there never was so bright a coxcomb! [Apart.

Wit. 'Egad I'll humour him: Ha, ha? [Apart.

Char. By all means, you will make him shine to a miracle. [Apart.

Wit. Why then, punish me Tom, if ever I was so well diverted at a French comedy. [Shakes his hand.

Fran. That may very well be, Sir; for fools are apt to be fond of their own parts. [Shakes Witling's hand.

Char. Ha, ha!

Wit. Ay! so they are, the devil take me; for, I see, there's no beating thee out of thine.

Fran. How should I be out, when you play all the game yourself!

Wit. No, no, Tom, I only laugh all; but 'tis your part that makes me, child.

Fran. Right! If you did not laugh, where the devil should the jest be?

Wit. Why, then, you see, I do the fool justice, Tom, Ha, ha!

Fran.

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insist upon them both, Madam : and so you may as well put your passion in your pocket, Madam.

L. Wrang. Insupportable ! *[Walks in anger.]*

Wit. Ha, ha ! well said, Tommy ! What, art thou crack-brained still, my dear ? How the devil didst thou come by Sir Gill's consent ? What, he has not mortgag'd it twice over, has he ? But if he has, with all my heart ; I fancy we shall find a way to make his first deed stand good, however ; and that, I am sure, I have here safe in my pocket, child.

Fran. Oh, that shall be tried presently, Sir ; and here he comes with the lawyer, for the purpose.

Enter Sir Gilbert, with a Lawyer.

L. Wrang. Mr. Wrangle, what do you mean by this usage ? How dare you affront me thus ?

Sir Gilb. I affront you, my Lady !

L. Wrang. Ay, Sir, by bringing these roysters here, to insult me in my own family.

Sir Gilb. Frankly—stand by me.

Gran. Roysters, Madam !

L. Wrang. Sir, I am not speaking to you. I say, Mr. Wrangle, how dare you do this ?

Sir Gilb. Do, Madam ! I don't do any thing, not I. If the gentlemen have done any harm, you had best talk to them ; I believe they have both tongues in their heads, and will be able to answer you.

Fran. Ay, ay, Madam, if you have received any injury from either of us, we are the proper persons to talk with you.

L. Wrang. What, will you stand by, and tamely see me abused in my own house ?

Sir Gilb. Odzines, Madam, don't abuse yourself ! the gentlemen are civil gentlemen, and men of honour ; but if you don't know how to behave yourself to them, that's none of their fault.

L. Wrang. Prodigious ! behave myself ! Do you presume to teach me, you rude, illiterate monster ?

Sir Gilb. Hold her fast, pray, gentlemen.

Gran. *[Interposing.]* Come, come, be composed, Madam. Consider how these violent emotions dishonour your philosophy.

Sir Gilb. Ay, Madam, if you are a philosopher, now, let's see a sample of it.

L. Wrang. Yes, Sir, I'll give you one instance of it immediately; before you stit out of this room, I'll make you do justice to this gentleman; I'll make you keep your contract, Sir.

Sir Gilb. Why, Madam, you need not be in a passion about that; I don't design any other; I'll do him justice immediately.

L. Wrang. Oh, will you so? Come, then, where's the deed, Sir?

Wit. A-hum! Your humble servant! How dost thou do now, my little Tommy?

Fran. I'll tell you presently, Sir.

Wit. Ha, ha! 'Egad, thou art resolved to die hard, I find.

Law. Here, Madam, this is the deed; there is nothing wanting but the blanks to be filled up with the bridegroom's name. Pray, which is the gentleman?

L. Wrang. Here, Sir, this is he—Put in William Witling, esq.

Sir Gilb. Hold, Madam, two words to that bargain? that is not the gentleman I have resolved upon.

L. Wrang. Come, come, Mr. Wrangle, don't be a fool, I say.

Sir Gilb. And, pray, Madam, don't you pretend to be wiser than I am.

L. Wrang. What stupid fetch have you got in your head now?

Wit. Heyday! what time of the moon is this? Why, have not I your contract here in my hand, Sir Gilbert?

Sir Gilb. With all my heart; make your best on't; I'll pay the penalty; and what have you to say now? And so, Sir, [*To the Lawyer.*] I say, put me in Thomas Frankly, esq.

L. Wrang. Mr. Wrangle, don't provoke me. Do you know that the penalty of your refusing Mr. Witling, is above six-and-twenty thousand pounds difference, Sir?

Sir Gilb. Yes, Madam; but to let you see that I am not the fool you take me for, neither; there's that will secure me against paying a farthing of it.

[*Sir Gilbert shews a bond.*

L. Wrang.

L. Wrang. What do you mean?

Sir Gilb. Why, that this, Madam, is a joint bond from Mr. Granger and Frankly, to indemnify me from all demands, costs, and consequences of Mr. Witling's contract.

[*Lady Wrangle peruses the bond.*]

Char. Now, Mr. Witling, you see upon what a shallow foundation Frankly built all his vanity and assurance. But, poor man! he did not consider it was still in my power to marry you, tho' you had no contract at all with my father.

Wit. Right, my pretty soul—I suppose he thought the merit and frank air of this bond, forsooth, would have made you cock sure to him; but I'll let him see, presently, that I know how to pay a handsome compliment to a fair lady, as well as himself. 'Egad, I will bite his head off.

Char. Ay, do, Mr. Witling; you touch my heart with the very thought of it.

Wit. Ah, you charming devil!

L. Wrang. [*To Sir Gilbert.*] Is this, then, your expedient? Is this your fordid way of evading all right and justice? Go, you vile scandal to the board you sit at! But you shall find that I have a superior sense of honour: and thus, thus, thus, I'll force you to be just.

[*Tears the bond.*]

Fran. Confusion!

Sir Gilb. Oons, Madam! what do you mean by this outrage?

L. Wrang. Now, where's your security? Where is your vile evasion now, Sir? What trick, what shift have you now to save you?

Sir Gilb. Frankly——stand by me.

'*Fran.* Was ever such a dévil?'

Gran. Fear nothing; I'll warrant you; come, Sir, don't be disheartened; your security shall be renewed to your content. Let the lawyer draw it up this instant, and I'll give my word and honour to sign it again before all this company.

Sir Gilb. Say'st thou so, my lad? Why, then, odheartlikins——Frankly, stand by me.

Fran. Generous Granger!

L. Wrang. Let the lawyer draw up any such thing in my house, if he dares.

Gran.

Gran. Nay, then, Madam, I'll see who dares molest him.

Fran. 'Egad, whoever does, shall have more than one to deal with.

Sir Gilb. Well said; stand your ground—Write away, man. [To the Lawyer.

Char. Now, Mr. Witling——

Wit. Nay, nay, if that's your play, gentlemen—Come, come, I'll shew you a shorter way to make an end of this matter—and to let you see you are all in the wrong box, and that now I am secure of the lady's inclination, I think it a dishonour to her beauty to make use of any other advantage, than the naked merit of her humble servant. There, Sir Gilbert, there's your contract back again; tear it, cancel it, or light your pipe with it—And Madam—— [To Char.

Char. Ay, now, Mr. Witling, you have made me the happiest creature living. And now, Mr. Lawyer——

Wit. Ay, now, gentlemen——

Char. Put in Thomas Frankly, esq.

Wit. Fire and brimstone!

Fran. Ay, now Mr. Witling——

Sir Gilb. Odsheart, in with him——

L. Wrang. Come, come, Mr. Wrangle——

Sir Gilb. Oons, wife, be quiet!

L. Wrang. Wife! What, am I abused, insulted, then?

Sir Gilb. Ah, Charlotte, let me hug thee, and buss thee, and bless thee to death! But, here, hussy, here's a pair of lips that will make better work with thee.

Wit. Bit, by the powers!

Char. Nay, don't say that of me, Mr. Witling; 'twas even all your own doing: for you can't reproach me with having once told you I ever loved, or liked you. How then could you think of marrying me?

Wit. Not reproach you, Madam? Oons, and death! did you not as good as——

Fran. Hold, Sir; when you speak to my wife, I must beg you to soften the tone of your voice a little.

Wit. Heyday! what a pox, must not losers have leave to speak, neither?

Fran. No, no, my dear Billy, thou art no loser at all; for

Fran. Ay, the devil take me, dost thou ; I never saw him better acted.

Wit. Ah ! but you don't know, my dear, that to make a coxcomb shine, requires a little more wit than thou art aware of.

Fran. I know that he who has least wit of us two, has enough to do that, my dear.

Wit. Ay, that is when a coxcomb shows himself, Tom.

Fran. Nay, in that I grant no mortal can come up to thee.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha ! Oh, dear rogue, I must kiss thee.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha !

Enter Lady Wrangle.

L. Wrang. Your servant, your servant, good people : whence all this mighty mirth, pray ?

Wit. O, Madam, here has been such a scene ! such hit-and-dash upon one another ; in short, such brightness o'both sides, the full moon, in a frosty night, never came up to it.

Char. I must needs say, I never saw Mr. Witling shine so before.

Fran. No, Madam ? Why, he always talks like a lunatic, as you now may judge by his similies.

Wit. Ah, poor Tom ! thy wit indeed is, like the light of the moon, none of thy own : if I don't mistake, my dear, I was forced to shine upon thee, before thou wert able to make one reflection.

Fran. There you are once in the right : for I certainly could not have laughed, if you had not given me a hearty occasion.

Wit. Ay, but the cream of the jest is, Tom, that at the same time I really gave thee no occasion at all.

Fran. Right again, my dear : for your not knowing that, is the only jest that's worth laughing at.

Both. Ha, ha, ha !

L. Wrang. This must be some extraordinary mistake indeed ; for I have no notion that Mr. Frankly and you can have reason to laugh upon the same occasion.

Wit. Why, faith ! the occasion is a little extraordi-

H

nary ;

nary ; for you must know, Madam, that honest Tom and I here, are both going to be married to this lady.

L. Wrang. Both !

Wit. Ay both, Madam ; for, it seems, she has not been able to convince us, that either of us must go without her.

L. Wrang. That's so like Mr. Frankly's vanity, that cannot think his mistress lost, though he sees her just falling into the arms of his rival.

Fran. My vanity and yours, Madam, are much upon a foot ; tho' I think you happened to be first cured of it.

L. Wrang. What do you mean, Sir ?

Fran. That by this time you are convinced I was never in love with your ladyship.

L. Wrang. I am convinced, that a very little trouble would have made you so.

Fran. It must have been a good deal more than it cost me, to make you believe so.

L. Wrang. If you have still hopes of marrying Charlotte, Sir, I don't wonder at your believing any thing. Ha, ha, ha !

Fran. Laugh when you see me despair, Madam.

L. Wrang. I need not stay for that ; your hope, is ridiculous enough, and I laugh because you can't see.

Fran. ' Yes, yes, I can see,' Madam : I have seen all this day what 'tis you drive at : in short, Madam, you have no mind that either of Sir Gilbert's daughters should marry ; because if they die maids, you have secured the chance of succeeding to their fortunes.

L. Wrang. Ay, do make the world believe that, if you can : persuade Mr. Witling that I have no mind Charlotte should marry him.

Fran. What Mr. Witling thinks, is out of the question, Madam ; but you are sure that she never designs to marry him : so that your setting up his pretensions is not with the least view of doing him good, but of doing me harm ; or rather, that while you manage the dispute well on both sides, neither of us may have her.

L. Wrang. He has guess'd the secret ; but that shall not hinder my proceeding. [*Aside.*] You are in the right to hope as long as you can, Sir ; but I presume you
don't

‘ don’t do it from my friendship, nor Mr. Wrangle’s consent, or Charlotte’s inclination.

‘ *Fran.* Be what it will, Madam, it has a better foundation, than your hope of succeeding either to her’s or Sophronia’s fortune: for, shall I tell you another secret, Madam? Sophronia is going to be married to Granger; so that you are equally like to be disappointed there too.

L. Wrang. Sophronia married!

Fran. Ay, ay, married, married, Madam; wedded, bedded, made a mere wife of: ’tis not half an hour ago since I saw her sink, and melt into his bosom, with all the yielding fondness of a milk-maid.

L. Wrang. Sophronia, do this?

Fran. Sophronia, Madam; nay, Sir Gilbert was, at the same time, a secret witness of all; and was glad, glad of it, Madam: ‘and to my certain knowledge, resolves, that Granger shall marry her instantly:’ and so, Madam, all that fantastic fort philosophy, that you have been building in her brains for seven years together, is (with one honest attack of mere flesh and blood) fairly demolished, and brought to nothing.

L. Wrang. I’ll not believe it; I know your ears deceiv’d you; he might perhaps transport her, but never to a sensual thought.

‘ *Fran.* Oons! Madam, I tell you, I heard and saw it all; myself, saw her sighing, blushing, panting in his arms, with mortal, sensual, amorous desire: all her romantic pride reduced, and humbled to the obedience of that universal monarch of mankind, Love, Madam; plain, naked, natural Love, Love, Madam.

‘ *L. Wrang.* I am confounded! If this be true, his triumph is insupportable. [*Aside.*] Ha! what do I see!’

Enter Granger, leading Sophronia.

‘ *Fran.* Dear Granger, I congratulate thy happiness!

‘ *Gran.* My happiness indeed! for till I was victorious, I knew not half the value of my conquest.

‘ *Fran.* [*To Sophronia.*] Give me then leave to hope, Madam, that our former difference is forgot; since the more elevated passion of my friend has now convinced me of my own unworthiness.

' *Soph.* I cannot disavow my tenderest sense of Gran-
 ' ger's merit, give it what name you please; I own 'tis
 ' something—*Quod nequeo dicere, & sentio tantum* :
 ' but am proud that love alone, unassisted by philosophy,
 ' could never have subdued me.

' *L. Wrang.* Is it possible !

By your leave, Madam.

[*She breaks through the company, and takes Soph. apart.*

' *Fran.* Heyday ! what's to do now ?

' *Gran.* O Frankly ! I have such a melting
 ' scene to tell thee !

' *Fran.* You may spare yourself the trouble,
 ' Sir Gilbert and I over-heard every word of it. } [*Aside.*

' But I allow you an artist.

' *Gran.* Was it not very whimsical ?

' *Fran.* Hush !

' *L. Wrang.* [*To Soph.*] Look in my face—full upon
 me.

Soph. Why that severe look, Madam ?

L. Wrang. To make you blush at your apostasy.

Soph. Converts to truth are no apostates, Madam.

L. Wrang. Is this your self-denial ! This your distaste
 of odious man ?

Soph. Madam, I have consider'd well my female state,
 and am now a proselyte to that philosophy, which says,
 Nature makes nought in vain.

L. Wrang. What's then become of your Platonic
 system ?

Soph. Dissolved, evaporated, impracticable, and fallacious
 all : you'll own I have labour'd in the experiment,
 but found at last, that to try gold in a crucible of virgin-
 wax, was a mere female folly.

L. Wrang. But how durst you, Madam, entertain a
 thought of marriage without acquainting me ?

Soph. Madam, I am now under this gentleman's pro-
 tection ; and from henceforth, think my actions only cog-
 nizable to him.

L. Wrang. Very fine !

Fran. Ay, ay, Madam, 'tis but fretting your spleen
 to no purpose ; you have no right to dispose of either of
 those ladies : Sir Gilbert's consent is what we depend
 upon : and as far as that can go, we shall make bold to
 insist

for you have made your call, you see, and now have fairly had your refusal too.

Wit. Ha, ha! that's pleasantly said, however, 'egad! I can't help laughing at a good thing, though, tho' I am half ready to hang myself.

Fran. Nay, then, Witling, henceforth I'll allow thee a man of parts; 'tho', at the same time, you must grant 'me, there are no fools like your wits.' But since thou hast wit enough to laugh at thyself, I think nobody else ought to do it.

Wit. Why, then, dear Tom, I give you joy; for, to say the truth, I believe I was a little over-hasty in this matter. But, as thou sayest, he that has not wit enough to find himself sometimes a fool, is in danger of being fool enough to have nobody think him a wit but himself.

Fran. [*To L. Wrang.*] And now, Madam, were it but possible to deserve your pardon——

L. Wrang. I see you know my weakness——Submission must prevail upon a generous nature—I forgive you.

Sir Gilb. Why, that's well said of all sides. And, now you are part of my family, gentlemen, I'll tell you a secret that concerns your fortunes——Hark you—in one word——sell——sell out as fast as you can; for (among friends) the game's up——ask no questions——but, I tell you, the jest is over——But money down, (d'ye observe me?) money down. Don't meddle for time; for the time's a coming, when those that buy will not be able to pay. And so, the devil take the hindmost; and Heaven bless you all together.

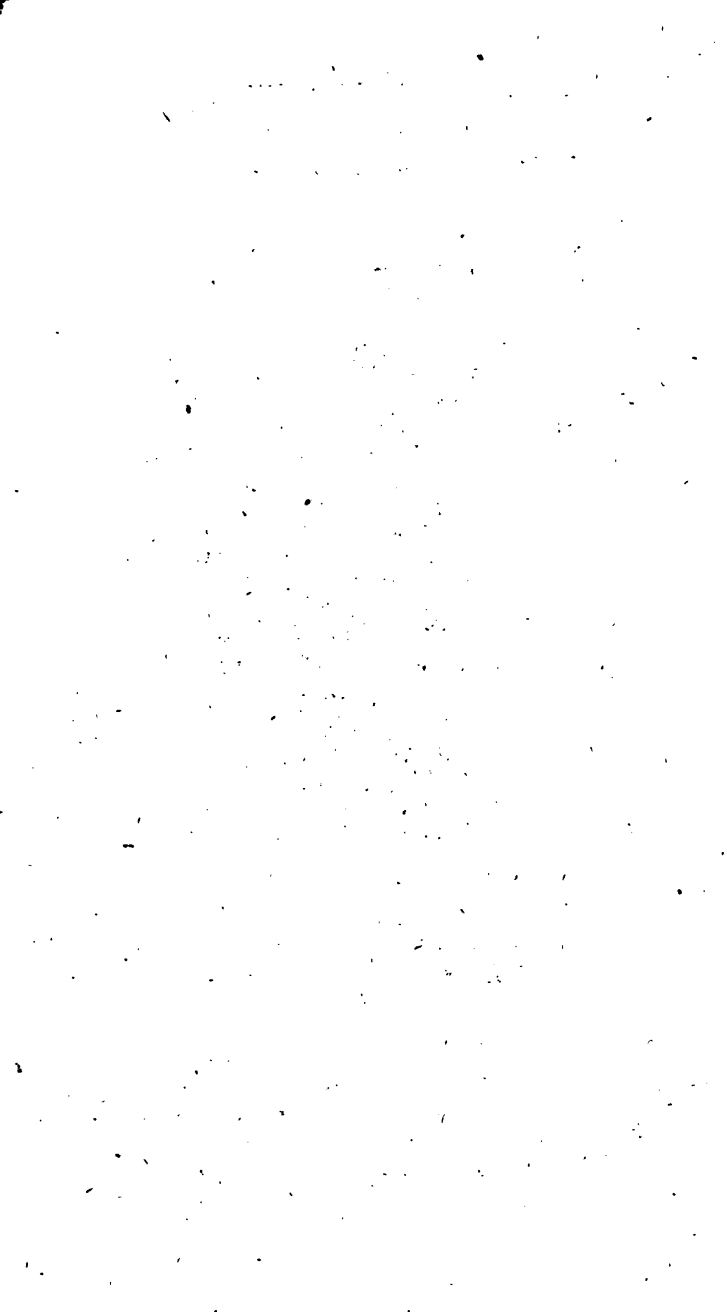
Gran. And now, Sophronia, set we forward to the promised land of love.

Soph. In vain, against the force of nature's law,
Would rigid morals keep our hearts in awe;
All our lost labours of the brain but prove,
In life there's no philosophy like love.

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

THE time is come the Roman bard foretold,
 A brazen year succeeds an age of gold;
 An age ———
 When specious books were open'd for undoing,
 And English hands, in crouds, subscrib'd their ruin.
 Some months ago, whoever could suppose,
 A goosequill race of rulers should have rose,
 T'have made the warlike Britons groan beneath their blows? }
 Evils, that never yet beheld the sun,
 To foreign-arms, or civil jars, unknown, }
 These trembling miscreants, by their wiles have done.
 Thus the fierce lion, whom no force could foil,
 By village-curs is baited in the toil.
 Forgive the muse then, if her scenes were laid
 Before your fair possessions were betray'd;
 She took the sitting form as fame then ran,
 While a director seem'd an honest man:
 But were she from his present form to take him,
 What a huge gorging monster must she make him?
 How would his paunch with golden ruin swell?
 Whole families devouring at a meal?
 What motley humour in a scene might flow,
 Were we these upstarts in their arts to show?
 When their high betters at their gates have waited,
 And all to beg the favour to be cheated;
 Even that favour, (or they're by fame bely'd)
 To raise the value of the cheat, deny'd.
 And while Sir John was airing on his prancers,
 He's left his cookmaid to give peers their answers.
 Then clerks in Berlins, purchas'd by their cheats,
 That splash their walking betters in the streets.
 And while, by fraud, their native country's sold,
 Cry, Drive, you dog, and give your horses gold:
 Even Jews no bounds of luxury refrain,
 But boil their Christian hams in pure Champaign.
 Till then, the guilty, that have caus'd these times,
 Feel a superior censure for their crimes,
 Let all, whose wrongs the face of mirth can bear,
 Enjoy the muse's vengeance on them here.





*M. BADDELEY in the Character of PETULANT.
 Carry your Mistress's Monkey a Spider,
 go flea Dogs and read romances,
 I'll go to bed to my Maid.*

2.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BULL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVII.



*M. BADDELEY in the Character of PETULANT.
Carry your Mistress's Monkey a Spider,
go flea Dogs and read romances,
I'll go to bed to my Maid.*

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
WAY OF THE WORLD.

A COMEDY,

As written by WILLIAM CONGREVE.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

*Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui maculis non vultis.—
Metuat doti deprensa.—*

HOR. Sat. 2. l. 1.
1610.



L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCCLXXVI.



To the Right Honourable

R A L P H,

EARL OF MONTAGUE, &c.

MY LORD,

WHETHER the world will arraign me of vanity or not, that I have presumed to dedicate this comedy to your Lordship, I am yet in doubt ; though it may be it is some degree of vanity even to doubt of it. One who has at any time had the honour of your Lordship's conversation, cannot be supposed to think very meanly of that which he would prefer to your perusal : yet it were to incur the imputation of too much sufficiency, to pretend to such a merit as might abide the test of your Lordship's censure.

Whatever value may be wanting to this play while it is mine, will be sufficiently made up to it, when it is once become your Lordship's : and it is my security, that I cannot have over-rated it more by my dedication, than your Lordship will dignify it by your patronage.

That it succeeded on the stage, was almost beyond my expectation ; for but little of it was prepared for that general taste which seems now to be predominant in the palates of our audience.

Those characters which are meant to be ridiculed in most of our comedies, are of fools so gross, that, in my humble opinion, they should rather disturb than divert the well-natured and reflecting part of an audience ; they are rather objects of charity than contempt ; and instead of moving our mirth, they ought very often to excite our compassion.

This reflection moved me to design some characters, which should appear ridiculous, not so much through a natural folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the stage) as through an affected wit; a wit, which, at the same time that it is affected, is also false. As there is some difficulty in the formation of a character of this nature, so there is some hazard which attends the progress of its success upon the stage; for many come to a play, so over-charged with criticism, that they very often let fly their censure, when, through their rashness, they have mistaken their aim. This I had occasion, lately, to observe; for this play had been acted two or three days, before some of these hasty judges could find the leisure to distinguish betwixt the character of a Witwoud and a Truewit.

I must beg your Lordship's pardon for this digression from the true course of this epistle; but that it may not seem altogether impertinent, I beg that I may plead the occasion of it, in part of that excuse of which I stand in need, for recommending this comedy to your protection. It is only by the countenance of your Lordship, and the few so qualified, that such who write with care and pains can hope to be distinguished; for the prostituted name of poet, promiscuously levels all that bear it.

Terence, the most correct writer in the world, had a Scipio and a Lelius, if not to assist him, at least to support him in his reputation: and, notwithstanding his extraordinary merit, it may be, their countenance was not more than necessary.

The purity of his style, the delicacy of his turn, and the justness of his characters, were all of them beauties, which the greater part of his audience were incapable of tasting. Some of the coarsest strokes of Plautus, so severely censured by Horace, were more likely to affect the multitude; such who come with expectation to laugh at the last act of a play, and are better entertained with two or three unseasonable jests, than with the artful solution of the fable.

As Terence excelled in his performances, so had he great advantages to encourage his undertakings; for he built most on the foundations of Menander: his plots were generally modelled, and his characters ready drawn to his hand. He copied Menander; and Menander had
no

no less light in the formation of his characters, from the observations of Theophrastus, of whom he was a disciple; and Theophrastus, it is known, was not only the disciple, but the immediate successor of Aristotle, the first and greatest judge of poetry. These were great models to design by; and the further advantage which Terence possessed, towards giving his plays the due ornaments of purity of stile, and justness of manners, was not less considerable, from the freedom of conversation which was permitted him with Lelius and Scipio, two of the greatest and most polite men of his age. And, indeed, the privilege of such a conversation, is the only certain means of attaining to the perfection of dialogue.

If it has happened in any part of this comedy, that I have gained a turn of stile, or expression more correct, or at least more corrigible, than in those which I have formerly written, I must, with equal pride and gratitude, ascribe it to the honour of your Lordship's admitting me into your conversation, and that of a society where every body else was so well worthy of you, in your retirement, last summer, from the town; for it was immediately after that this comedy was written. If I have failed in my performance, it is only to be regretted, where there were so many, not inferior either to a Scipio or a Lelius, that that there should be one wanting equal in capacity to a Terence.

If I am not mistaken, poetry is almost the only art which has not yet laid claim to your Lordship's patronage. Architecture and painting, to the great honour of our country, have flourished under your influence and protection. In the mean time, Poetry, the eldest sister of all arts, and parent of most, seems to have resigned her birth-right, by having neglected to pay her duty to your Lordship; and by permitting others of a later extraction to prepossess that place in your esteem, to which none can pretend a better title. Poetry, in its nature, is sacred to the good and great; the relation between them is reciprocal, and they are ever propitious to it. It is the privilege of poetry to address to them, and it is their prerogative alone to give it protection.

This received maxim is a general apology for all writers who consecrate their labours to great men; but I

could wish, at this time, that this address were exempted from the common pretence of all dedications; and as I can distinguish your Lordship even among the most deserving, so this offering might become remarkable by some particular instance of respect, which should assure your Lordship, that I am, with all due sense of your extreme worthiness and humanity,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

And most obliged humble servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.



T O

Mr. CONGREGVE;

OCCASIONED BY HIS

C O M E D Y,

CALLED THE

W A Y O F T H E W O R L D,

WHEN pleasure's falling to the low delight,
 In vain the joys of the uncertain fight;
 No sense of wit when rude spectators know,
 But in distorted gesture, farce and show:
 How could, great author, your aspiring mind
 Dare to write only to the few refin'd;
 Yet tho' that nice ambition you pursue,
 'Tis not in Congreve's power to please but few.
 Implicitly devoted to his fame,
 Well-dress'd barbarians know his awful name;
 Tho' senseless they're of mirth, but when they laugh,
 As they feel wine, but when till drunk, they quaff.
 On you, from fate, a lavish portion fell,
 In ev'ry way of writing to excel.
 Your muse applause to Arabella brings,
 In notes as sweet as Arabella sings.
 Whene'er you draw an undissembled woe,
 With sweet distress your rural numbers flow.
 Pastora's the complaint of ev'ry swain,
 Pastora still the echo of the plain!
 Or if your muse describe, with warming force,
 The wounded Frenchman falling from his horse;

And

And her own William glorious in the strife,
 Bestowing on the prostrate foe his life :
 You the great act as gen'rously rehearse,
 And all the English fury's in your verse.
 By your selected scenes, and handsome choice,
 Ennobled Comedy exalts her voice ;
 You check unjust esteem, and fond desire,
 And teach to scorn what else we should admire ;
 The just impresson taught by you we bear.
 The player acts the world, the world the play'r ;
 Whom still that world unjustly disesteems,
 Tho' he, alone, professes what he seems :
 But when your muse assumes her tragic part,
 She conquers and she reigns in ev'ry heart ;
 To mourn with her men cheat their private woe,
 And gen'rous pity's all the grief they know.
 The widow, who impatient of delay,
 From the town-joys must mask it to the play,
 Joins with your Mourning Bride's resistless moan,
 And weeps a loss she slighted, when her own.
 You give us torment, and you give us ease,
 And vary our afflictions as you please.
 Is not a heart so kind as yours in pain,
 To load your friends with cares you only feign ;
 Your friends in grief, compos'd yourself, to leave ?
 But 'tis the only way you'll e'er deceive.
 Then still, great Sir, your moving pow'r employ,
 To lull our sorrow, and correct our joy.

R. STEELE.

P R O L O G U E

OF those few fools who with ill stars are curst,
 Sure scribbling fools, call'd poets, fare the worst;
 For they're a set of fools which Fortune makes,
 And after she has made them fools, forsakes.
 With Nature's dafs 'tis quite a diff'rent case,
 For Fortune favours all her ideot-race;
 In her own nest the cuckoo-eggs we find;
 O'er which she broods to hatch the changeling-kind,
 No portion for her own she has to spare,
 So much she doats on her adopted care.

Poets are bubbles, by the town drawn in,
 Suffer'd at first some trifling stakes to win:
 But what unequal hazards do they run!
 Each time they write, they venture all they've won:
 The 'squire that's butter'd skill, is sure to be undone.
 This author, heretofore, has found your favour;
 But pleads no merit from his past behaviour.
 To build on that might prove a vain presumption,
 Should grants, to poets made, admit resumption:
 And in Parnassus he must lose his seat,
 If that he found a forfeited estate.

He owns with toil he wrought the following stanzas;
 But if they're naught, ne'er spare him for his pains:
 Damn him the more; have no commiseration
 For dulcst on nature deliberation.
 He swears he'll not resent one hiss'd-off farce,
 Nor, like those peevish wits, his play maintain,
 Who, to assert their sense, your taste arraign.
 Some plot we think he has, and some new thought;
 Some humour too, no farce; but that's a fault.
 Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect;
 For so reform'd a town, who dares correct?
 To please, this time, has been his sole pretence;
 He'll not instruct, lest it should give offence.
 Should he, by chance, a knave or fool expose,
 That hurts none here—sure here are none of those.
 In short, our play shall (with your leave to shew it)
 Give you one instance of a passive poet,
 Who to your judgments yields all resignation,
 To save or damn, after your own discretion.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
<i>Fainall</i> , in love with Mrs. <i>Marwood</i> ,	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Mirabell</i> , in love with Mrs. <i>Millamant</i> ,	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Witwoud</i> , { follow- { ers of <i>Petulant</i> , { <i>Mill.</i> }	Mr. King. Mr. Baddeley.	Mr. Lee Lewes. Mr. Woodward.
<i>Sir Wilful Witwoud</i> , halfbrother to <i>Wit-</i> <i>woud</i> , and nephew to Lady <i>Wishfort</i> .	Mr. Yates.	Mr. Dunstall.
<i>Waitwell</i> , servant to <i>Mirabell</i> ,	Mr. Parsons.	Mr. Wilson.

W O M E N.

Lady <i>Wishfort</i> , ene- my to <i>Mirabell</i> , for having falsely pre- tended love to her,	Mrs. Hopkins.	Mrs. Pitt.
Mrs. <i>Millamant</i> , a fine lady, niece to Lady <i>Wishfort</i> , and loves <i>Mirabell</i> ,	Mrs. Abington.	Mrs. Barry.
Mrs. <i>Marwood</i> , friend to Mr. <i>Fainall</i> , and likes <i>Mirabell</i> .	Miss Sherry.	Mrs. Mattocks.
Mrs. <i>Fainall</i> , daugh- ter to Lady <i>Wish-</i> <i>fort</i> , and wife to <i>Fainall</i> ,	Mrs. Greville.	Mrs. Whitefield.
<i>Foible</i> , woman to La- dy <i>Wishfort</i> ,	Miss Pope.	Mrs. Green.
<i>Mincing</i> , woman to Mrs. <i>Millamant</i> ,	Miss Platt.	Mrs. Pouffin.

Dancers, Footmen, and Attendants.

S C E N E, L O N D O N.

The Time equal to that of the Presentation.

T H E

T H E
WAY OF THE WORLD.

* * *The lines distinguished by inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are the additions of the Theatre.*

A C T I.
SCENE I. *A Chocolate-house.*

Mirabell and Fainall [*rising from cards*] Betty *waiting.*

MIRABELL.

YOU are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the coldness of a losing gamester, lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

Mira. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining your pleasures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why so reserv'd? Something has put you out of humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to-day; and you are gay; that's all.

Fain. Confess, Millamant and you quarrell'd last night, after I left you; my fair cousin has some humours that would tempt the patience of a stoick. What, some coxcomb came in, and was well received by her, while you were by.

Mira. Witwoud and Petulant; and what was worse,
her

her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or to sum up all in her own name, my old lady Withfort came in.——

Fain. O there it is then——She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason——What, then my wife was there?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more, whom I never saw before; seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whisper'd one another; then complain'd aloud of the vapours, and after fell into a profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which reason I resolv'd not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity, with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose, and with a constrained smile told her, I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome; she reddened and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mira. She is more mistress of herself than to be under the necessity of such resignation.

Fain. What! tho' half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mira. I was then in such a humour, that I should have been better pleased if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their exhal nights; they have them three times a week, and meet by turns, at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murder'd reputations of the week. You and I are excluded; and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted; but somebody moved, that to avoid scandal, there might be one man of the community; upon which motion Witwood and Petulant were enrolled members.

Mira. And who may have been the founders of this sect? My Lady Withfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and full of the vigour of fifty-five,

five, declares for a friend and ratafia ; and let posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal you love to her niece, has provoked this separation : had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

Mira. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience ; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and compliment her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow, which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden ; and when she lay in of a droply, persuaded her she was reported to be in labour. The devil's in't if an old woman is to be flattered farther, unless a man should endeavour downright personally to debauch her ; and that my virtue forbade me. But for the discovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

Fain. What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances which you have slighted ? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mira. She was always civil to me, till of late ; I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice ; and think that she who does not refuse 'em ev'ry thing, can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell ; and tho' you may have cruelty enough not to satisfy a lady's longing ; you have too much generosity, not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected ; and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mira. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confess you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you, than is your wife.

Fain. Fy, fy, friend, if you grow censorious, I must leave you—I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

Mira. Who are they ?

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Fain, Petulant and Witwood—Bring me some chocolate.
late. [Exit.

Mira, Betty, what says our clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the last canonical hour, Sir.

Mira. How pertinently the jade answers me! Ha! almost one o'clock! [*Looking on his watch*] Oh, y'are come—

Enter Footman.

Mira. Well; is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

Serv. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras, that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up; and no hopes appearing of dispatch, besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have failed before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's Place; and there they were rivetted in a trice.

Mira. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Serv. Married and bedded, Sir: I am witness.

Mira. Have you the certificate?

Serv. Here it is, Sir.

Mira. Has the Taylor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the consummation 'till farther order; bid Waitwell shake his ears, and dame Parlet rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one o'clock by Rosamond's pond; that I may see her before she returns to her lady: and, as you tender your ears, be secret. [*Exit Footman.*

Enter Fainall,

Fain. Joy of your success, Mirabell; you look pleas'd.

Mira. Ay; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged, are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mira. I am of another opinion. The greater the cock-comb, always the more the scandal: for a woman who is not a fool,

a fool, can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwoud entertained by Millamant?

Mira. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

Fain. You do her wrong; for to give her her due, she has wit.

Mira. She has beauty enough to make any man think so; and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

Mira. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her, and separated her failings; 'I studied 'em and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other, to hate her heartily: to which end I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less and less disturbance; 'till in a few days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being displeas'd.' They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer, I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and my life on't you are your own man again.

Mira. Say you so?

Fain. I, I, I have experience; I have a wife, and so forth.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Is one squire Witwoud here?

Bet. Yes; what's your business?

Mess. I have a letter for him, from his brother Sir Willful, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

Bet. He's in the next room, friend——That way.

[*Exit Messenger.*

Mira. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilful Witwoud?

Fain. He is expected to-day. Do you know him?

Mira. I have seen him, he promises to be an extraordinary person; I think you have the honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Withfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

Mira. I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel.

Mira. For travel! Why the man that I mean is above forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstocked.

Mira. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant, and those of the squire his brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mira. So one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilful is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy.—But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monster in the Tempest; and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good-nature, and does not always want wit.

Mira. Not always; but as often as his memory fails him, and his common-place of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folk's

folk's wit. He is one, whose conversation can never be approved, yet it is now and then to endured. He has indeed one good quality, he is not exceptionous; 'for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire.'

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the original.

Enter Witwoud.

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears; pity me, Fainall; Mirabell, pity me.

Mira. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty?

Bet. Did not a messenger bring you one but now, Sir?

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard — A messenger, a mule, a beast of burden, he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another; and what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory.

Mira. A fool, and your brother, Witwoud!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half brother, my half brother; he is no nearer, upon honour.

Mira. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a soul.

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell, *le drole!* Good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him. — Fainall, how does your lady? Gad, I say any thing in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say: but she's the best woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgment, Mirabell?

Mira. You had better step and ask his wife, if you would be credibly informed.

Wit. Mirabell.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons :—Gad I have forgot what I was going to say to you.

Mir. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but pr'ythee excuse me,—my memory is such a memory.

Mira. Have a care of such apologies, Witwoud ;—for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen or his memory.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant ?

Wit. He's reckoning his money,—my money it was—I have no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play ;—for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee : since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course.

Mira. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates—Petulant's my friend, and a very honest fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a smattering—Faith and troth, a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit : nay, I'll do him justice. I'm his friend, I won't wrong him—And if he had any judgment in the world,—he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred.

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own—No more breeding than a bum-bailly, that I grant you—"Tis pity ; the fellow has fire and life.

Mira. What, courage ?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that,—I can't say as to that—Yes, faith, in controversy, he'll contradict any body.

Mira. Though 'twere a man whom he feared, or a woman whom he loved.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks ;—we have all our failings : you are too hard upon him,

him, you are faith. Let me excuse him,—I can defend most of his faults, except one or two: one he has, that's the truth on't; if he were my brother, I could not acquit him—That indeed I could wish were otherwise.

Mira. Ay, marry; what's that, Witwoud?

Wit. Oh, pardon me—Expose the infirmities of my friend.—No, my dear, excuse me there.

Fain. What I warrant he's insincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

Wit. No, no, what if he be? 'Tis no matter for that, his wit will excuse that: a wit should no more be sincere, than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too positive?

Wit. No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate.

Wit. That, that's his happiness—His want of learning gives him the more opportunity to shew his natural parts.

Mira. He wants words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning.

Fain. He's impudent.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain.

Wit. No.

Mira. What, he speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion.

Wit. Truths! Ha, ha, ha! No, no; since you will have it—I mean, he never speaks truth at all—that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

Enter Coachman.

Coach. Is master Petulant here, mistress?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a coach would speak with him.

Fain. Oh, brave Petulant! Three!

Bet.

Bet. I'll tell him.

[*Exit.*

Coach. You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon-water.

[*Exit.*

Wit. That should be for two fasting strumpets, and a bawd troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mira. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

Wit. 'Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting; but to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach hire, and something more, by the week, to call on him once a day at public places.

Mira. How!

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him.—Why this is nothing to what he used to do:—before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself—

Fain. Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean! why he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him—As soon as your back was turned—whip he was gone;—then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, slip into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice; where he would send in for himself; that is, I mean, call for himself, wait for himself; nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary—If believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming; Oh, I ask his pardon.

Enter Betty.

Bet. Sir, the coach stays.

Enter Petulant.

Pet. Well, well; I come—'Sbud, a man had as good be a professed midwife, as a professed whoremaster, at this rate; to be knocked up, and raised at all hours, and in all places. Pox on them, I won't come—D'ye hear, tell them I won't come—Let them snivel and cry their hearts out.

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it pass—I have a humour to be cruel.

Mira.

Mira. I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate.

Pet. Condition! condition's a dried fig, if I am not in humour——By this hand, if they were your——a——a——
 '—your what-dee-call-'ems themselves, they must wait
 'or rub off, if I want appetite.

' *Mira.* What-dee-call-'ems! What are they, Witwoud?

' *Wit.* Empresses, my dear——By your what-dee-call-'ems, he means Sultana queens.

' *Pet.* Ay, Roxana's.

' *Mira.* Cry your mercy.

' *Fain.* Witwoud says they are——

' *Pet.* What does he say they are?

' *Wit.* I! fine ladies, I say.

' *Pet.* Pass on, Witwoud——Harkee, by this light his relations——Two co-heiresses his cousins, and an old aunt, who loves catterwauling better than a conventicle.

' *Wit.* Ha, ha, ha! I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off——Ha, ha, ha! gad, I can't be angry with him, if he had said they were my mother and my sisters.

' *Mira.* No.

' *Wit.* No; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me; dear Petulant.'

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let them trundle. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent pretension there yet? I shall cut your throat, some time or other, Petulant, about that business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass——There are other throats to be cut——

Mira. Meaning mine, Sir?

Pet. Not I—I mean nobody—I know nothing——But there are uncles and nephews in the world—and they may be rivals——What then, all's one for that——

Mira.

Mira. Now, harkee, Petulant, come hither—Explain, or I shall call your interpreter.

Pet. Explain; I know nothing—Why you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my lady Wishfort's?

Mira. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough—You and he are not friends; and if he should marry and have a child, you may be disappointed, ha?

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why then say I know something.

Mira. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou sha't, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I! nothing I. If throats are to be cut, let swords clash; saug's the word, I shrug and am silent.

Mira. Oh, railery, railery. Come, I know thou art in the women's secrets—What, you're a cabalist; I know you staid at *Mistress*'s last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle, or me? Tell me. If thou hadst but good-nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, would shew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he would no more be seen by thee, than Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wot tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common sense then, for the future?

Mira. Faith, I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heaven may grant it thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, harkee.

Fain. Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as a lover.

Wit. Psha, psha, that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part—But that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—Harkee—To tell you a secret, but let it go no farther—Between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

Fain.

Fajn. I thought you had died for her.

Wit. Umph—No—

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow any body else—
Now, demme, I should hate that, if she were as handsome
as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks
for.

Fain. Why do you think so?

Wit. We staid pretty late there last night ; and heard
something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come
to town,—and is between him and the best part of his
estate ; Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my lady
Wishfort has been told ; and you know she hates Mira-
bell worse than a Quaker hates a parrot, or than a fish-
monger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has
seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I cannot say ; but there
were items of such a treaty being in embryo ; and if it
should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort
unfortunately fobbed, i'faith.

Fain. 'Tis impossible Millamant should hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my dear, I can't tell ; she's a woman,
and a kind of a humourist.

Mira. And this is the sum of what you could collect
last night.

Pet. The quintessence. May be Witwoud knows more,
he staid longer—Besides, they never mind him ; they
say any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greatest favourite.

Pet. Ay, *tête-à-tête* ; but not in public, because I make
remarks.

Mira. You do ?

Pet. Ay, ay ; pox, I'm malicious, man. Now he's
soft, you know ; they are not in awe of him—The
fellow's well bred ; he's what you call a——What-
dee-call-'em, a fine gentleman ; but he's silly withal.

Mira. I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity
requires. Fainall, are you for the Mall ?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the park ; the ladies talked
of being there.

Mira. I thought you were obliged to watch for your
brother, Sir Willful's arrival.

Wit.

Wit. No, no; he comes to his aunt's, my lady Wiffort: pox on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what shall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him for his estate; that I may beg you afterwards; and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. Oh, rare Petulant; thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning; thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a humour to be severe.

Mira. Are you? Pray then walk by yourselves—Let not us be accessory to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what? Then let them either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mira. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou oughtest to be most ashamed thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand——I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt or ill breeding.

Mira. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill-manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *St. James's Park.*

Mrs. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. FAINALL.

AY, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in extremes; either deoting, or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies

jealousies are insupportable : and when they cease to love (we ought to think at least) they loathe ; they look upon us with horror and distaste ; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as from such, fly from us.

Mrs. Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us ; and that the man so often should outlive the lover. But say what you will, 'tis better to be left than never to have been lov'd. To pass our youth in dull indifference, to refuse the sweets of life, because they once must leave us, is as preposterous, as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

Mrs. Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's humour.

Mrs. Mar. Certainly. To be free ; I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves, apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to ~~dear~~ like lovers ; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts, and every heart, or soon or late, receive and re-admit him as its lawful tyrant.

Mrs. Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceived ! Why you profess a libertine.

Mrs. Mar. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. Fain. Never.

Mrs. Mar. You hate mankind ?

Mrs. Fain. Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs. Mar. Your husband ?

Mrs. Fain. Most transcendently ; ay, though I say it, meritoriously.

Mrs. Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs. Fain. There.

Mrs. Mar. I join with you ; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs. Fain. Is it possible ? Dost thou hate those vipers, men ?

Mrs. Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come
C to

to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. Fain. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea.

Mrs. Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion farther.

Mrs. Fain. How?

Mrs. Mar. Faith, by marrying; ' if I could but find one that loved me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

' *Mrs. Fain.* You would not make him a cuckold?

' *Mrs. Mar.* No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

' *Mrs. Fain.* Why had you not as good do it?

' *Mrs. Mar.* Oh, if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

' *Mrs. Fain.* Ingenious mischief! Would thou wert married to Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. Would I were.

Mrs. Fain. You change colour.

Mrs. Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs. Fain. So do I; but I can hear him named. But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. Mar. I never loved him; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.

Mrs. Fain. By the reason you give for your aversion, one would think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies must acquit him.

Mrs. Mar. Oh, then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs. Fain. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden.

Mrs. Mar. What ails you?

Mrs. Fain. My husband. Don't you see him? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

Enter Fainall and Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. Ha, ha, ha! he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fain. For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Fain. My dear.

Mrs. Fain. My soul.

Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs. Fain. D'ye think so?

Mira. He's the only man that does, Madam.

Mrs. Fain. The only man that would tell me so at least; and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.

Fain. Oh, my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness: I know you cannot resent any thing from me; especially what is an effect of my concern.

Mrs. Fain. Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night, I would fain hear it out.

Mira. The persons concerned in that affair, have yet a tolerable reputation. — I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious.

Mrs. Fain. He has a humour more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another, by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both. [Exit Mira. and Mrs. Fain.]

Fain. Excellent creature! Well, sure if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable man.

Mrs. Mar. Ay?

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! Nothing remains, when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mrs. Mar. Will you not follow them.

Fain. Faith, I think not.

Mrs. Mar. Pray let us; I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs. Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you, that I am tender of your honour?

28 THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Fain. You would intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my wife and him.

Mrs. Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs. Mar. It may be you are deceived.

Fain. It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceived, Madam, and you are false.

Mrs. Mar. That I am false! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know, I see through all your little arts—Come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another, have made you clash till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm conviction reddening on your cheeks, and sparkling from your eyes.

Mrs. Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not—'Twas for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures; and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

Mrs. Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with love of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false. I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! The injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? to undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant?

Mrs. Mar. My obligations to my lady urged me: I had professed a friendship to her; and could not see her easy nature so abused by that dissembler.

Fain.

Fain. What, was it conscience then? Professed a friendship! Oh, the pious friendships of the female sex!

Mrs. Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha! you are my wife's friend too.

Mrs. Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you, upbraid me! Have I been false to her, through strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate? And have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? To you it should be meritorious, that I have been vicious: and do you reflect that guilt upon me, which should lie buried in your bosom?

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false, you urged it with deliberate malice—I was spoke in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousy: but you are stung to find you are discovered.

Mrs. Mar. It shall be all discovered. You too shall be discovered; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed—If I do it myself I shall prevent your baseness.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs. Mar. Disclose it to your wife; own what has past between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs. Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't—I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune: with both I trusted you, you bankrupt, in honour, as indigent of wealth.

Fain. Your fame I have preserved. Your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it—I is true—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stolen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconciliation: Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune, which then would have descended

to my wife ;——and wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you ?

Mrs. Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence.

Fain. Death, am I not married ? What's pretence ? Am I not imprisoned, fettered ? Have I not a wife ? Nay, a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow ; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to baffle through the ways of wedlock, and this world. Will you yet be reconciled to truth and me ?

Mrs. Mar. Impossible ! Truth and you are inconsistent——I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. For loving you ?

Mrs. Mar. I loathe the name of love after such usages, and next to the guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewel.

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mrs. Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Mar. I care not——Let me go——Break my hands, do——I'd leave them to get loose.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here ?

Mrs. Mar. Well, I have deserved it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs. Mar. Poor dissembling ! Oh, that——Well, it is not yet——

Fain. What ? What is it not ? What is it not yet ? It is not yet too late——

Mrs. Mar. No, it is not yet too late——I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mrs. Mar. But not to loathe, detest, abhor mankind, myself, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance——Come, I ask your pardon——No tears——I was to blame ; I could not love you, and be easy in my doubts——Pray forbear——I believe you ; I'm convinced I've done you wrong ; and any way, every way will make amends ;——I'll hate my wife yet more ; damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, any

any where, to another world—I'll marry thee—Be pacified—'Sdeath, they come! hide your face, your ears—You have a mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way, be persuaded. [Exeunt.]

Enter Mirabel and Mrs. Fainwell.

Mrs. Fain. They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs. Fain. While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him; but since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

Mira. Oh, you should hate with prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Yes; for I have loved with indiscretion.

Mira. You should have just so much disgust for your husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

Mrs. Fain. You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds, and would you set limits to that aversion of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this man?

Mir. 'Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gained a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excused, who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion; a worse had not answered to the purpose.' When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs. Fain. I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

Mira. 'In justice to you,' I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

Mrs. Fain. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

Mira. Waitwell, my servant.

Mrs. Fain. He is an humble servant to Foible, my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mira.

Mira. Care is taken for that—She is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs. Fain. Who?

Mira. Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt my servant to betray me, by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in the Fox, stand upon terms, so I made him sure before-hand.

Mrs. Fain. So, if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes; and release her, by producing the certificate of her gallant's former marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

Mrs. Fain. She talk'd last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mira. That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. Fain. Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my lady will do any thing to get an husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good lady would marry any thing that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs. Fain. Female frailty! 'We must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite, when the true is decayed.

Mira. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'Tis the green-sickness of a second childhood; and, like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall; and withers in an affected bloom.

Mrs. Fain. But here's your mistress.

Enter Mrs. Millamant, Witwoud, and Mincing.

Mira. Here she comes i' faith, full sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders—Ha, no, I cry her mercy.

Mrs. Fain. I see but one poor empty sculler; and he tows her woman after him,

Mira.

Mira. You seem to be unattended; Madam, ~~you~~ You us'd to have the *beau monde* throng after you; and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

Milla. O I have deny'd myself airs to-day. I have walk'd as fast through the crowd—

Wit. As a favourite just disgraced; and with as few followers.

Milla. Dear Mr. Witwoud, truce with your similitudes: for I am as sick of 'em—

Wit. As a physician of a good air—I cannot help it, Madam, tho' 'tis against myself.

Milla. Yet, again; Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a screen before a great fire. I confess I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs. Fain. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long?

Milla. Long! Lord; have I not made violent haste? I have ask'd every living thing I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes—No, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave, Witwoud, that were like enquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess it.

Mrs. Fain. You were dressed before I came abroad.

Milla. Ay, that's true—O but then I had—Mincing, what had I? Why was I so long?

Minc. O, Mem, your Laship staid to peruse a packet of letters.

Milla. O ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters—Nobody knows how to write letters; and yet one has 'em one does not know why—They serve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, Madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Milla. Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwoud. I never pin up my hair with prose. I think I try'd once, Mincing.

Minc.

Minc. O, Mem, I shall never forget it.

Milla. Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

Minc. 'Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, Mem, and all to no purpose. But when your Laship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure and so crips.

Wit. Indeed ! so crips ?

Minc. You're such a critic, Mr. Witwoud.

Milla. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night ?
O ay, and went away—Now I think on't, I'm angry ?—
No, now I think on't I am pleas'd—For I believe I gave you some pain.

Mira. Does that please you ?

Milla. Infinitely ; I love to give pain.

Mira. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature ; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Milla. O, I ask your pardon for that—One's cruelty is one's power, and when one parts with one's cruelty one parts with one's power : and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mira. Ay, ay ; suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—And then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be ? Nay, 'tis true : you are no longer handsome when you have lost your lover ; your beauty dies upon the instant : for beauty is the lover's gift ; 'tis he bestows your charms——Your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it : for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.

Milla. O the vanity of these men ! Fainall, d'ye hear him ? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome ! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift, —Lord, what is a lover that it can give ? Why one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases : and then, if one pleases, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why you make no more of making of lovers, Madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Milla.

Milla. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo: they can but reflect what we look and say; vain empty things, if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mira. Yet, to those two vain empty things, you owe too the greatest pleasures of your life.

Milla. How so?

Mira. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves prais'd; and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Milla. O fiction; Fainall, let us leave these men.

Mira. Draw off Witwoud. [*Aside to Mrs. Fainall.*

Mrs. Fain. Immediately; I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud. [*Exeunt Mrs. Fain. and Witwoud.*

Mira. I would beg a little private audience too—— You had the tyranny to deny me last night; though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concern'd my love.

Milla. You saw I was engag'd.

Mira. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools: things who visit you from their excessive idleness; bestowing on your easiness that time, which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable: or if they were, it shou'd be to you as a mortification; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Milla. I please myself——Besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mira. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools?

Milla. Yes, the vapours; fools are physic for it, next to *assa fetida*.

Mira. You are in a course of fools.

Milla. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom——you'll displease me——I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you——We shan't agree.

Mira. Not in our physic it may be.

Milla.

Milla. And yet our distemper in all likelihood will be the same; for we shall be sick of one another. I shan't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed, 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you Mirabell—I'm resolv'd—I think—You may go—Ha, ha, ha! What would you give that you could help loving me?

Mira. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it.

Milla. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you say to me?

Mira. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain-dealing and sincerity.

Milla. Sententious Mirabell! Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

Mira. You are merry, Madam; but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Milla. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha, ha, ha—Well I won't laugh, don't be peevish.—Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me, woo me now—Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well? I see they are walking away.

Mira. Can you find, in the variety of your disposition, one moment—

Milla. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed—No.

Mira. But how you come to know it—

Milla. Without the help of the devil, you can't imagine, unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

[Exit.]

Mira. I have something more—Gone—Think of you! To think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation; a very tranquility of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in
a wind-mill,

‘ a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turn’d; and by one as well as another; for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.—Oh, here come my pair of turtles.—What, billing so sweetly! Is not Valentine’s day over with you yet?

Enter Waitwell and Foible.

Mira. Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were marry’d for your own recreation, and not for my convenience.

Wait. Your pardon, Sir. With submission, we have indeed been solacing in lawful delights; but still with an eye to business, Sir; I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, Sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way.

Mira. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

Foib. O-la, Sir, I’m so ashamed—I’m afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, Sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did, indeed, Sir. It was my fault that she did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my lady, as you instructed me, Sir, that I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland your uncle; and ~~that~~ I would put her ladyship’s picture in my pocket to shew him; which I’ll be sure to say has made him so enamour’d with her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyship’s feet, and worship the original.

Mira. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think she has profited, Sir, I think so.

Foib. You have seen Madam Millamant, Sir?

Mira. Yes.

Foib. I told her, Sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity; she had so much company last night.

Mira. Your diligence will merit more—in the mean time— [Gives money.]

Foib. O dear Sir, your humble servant.

Wait. Spouse.

Mira. Send off, Sir, not a penny—Go on and prosper, Foible—The lease shall be made good, and the farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foib. I don't question your generosity, Sir; and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, Sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress 'till I come—O dear, I'm sure that [looking out.] was Mrs. Marwood, that went by in a mask, if she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, Sir. B'w'y Waitwell. [Exit.]

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please. The jade's so pert upon her preferment she forgets herself.

Mira. Come, Sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself—and transform into Sir Rowland.

Wait. Why, Sir, it will be impossible I should remember myself—Marry'd, knighted, and attended, all in one day! 'Tis enough to make a man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self; and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither, and now I remember, I'm marry'd, and can't be my own man again.

Ay, there's my grief; that's the sad change of life; To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE, *A room in Lady Wishfort's house.*

Lady Wishfort at her toilet, Peg waiting.

LADY WISHFORT.

Merciful! no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, Madam.

Lady W. I have no more patience—If I have not fretted

ted myself till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear, sweetheart? An errant ash-colour, as I'm a person. Look you how this wench stirs! Why dost thou not fetch me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, Mopus?

Peg. The red ratafia does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

Lady W. Ratafia, fool! no, fool, not the ratafia, fool. Grant me patience! I mean the Spanish paper, ideot, complexion. Darling paint, paint, paint; dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands, like bobbins, before thee? Why dost thou not stir, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires!

Peg. Lord, Madam, your ladyship is so impatient!—I cannot come at the paint, Madam; Mrs. Foible has locked it up, and carried the key with her.

Lady W. A pox take you both! Fetch me the cherry-brandy, then.

[*Exit Peg.*

I'm as pale and as faint—I look like Mrs. Qualmfick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding. Wench, come, come, wench; what art thou doing; Sipping, tasting? Save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

Re-enter Peg, with a bottle and China cup.

Peg. Madam, I staid to bring your ladyship a cup.

Lady W. A cup, save thee! and what a cup hast thou brought? Dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? Why didst thou not bring thy thimble? Hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket, with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill—So—again. See who that is. [*One knocks.*] Set down the bottle first. Here, here, under the table—What, wouldst thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? As I'm a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road, before she came to me, 'like Maritornes, 'the Asturian, in Don Quixote.' No Foible yet?

Peg. No, Madam, Mrs. Marwood.

Lady W. Oh, Marwood! let her come in. Come in, good Marwood.

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Mar. I'm surprized to find your ladyship in dishabille at this time of day.

Lady W. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning and never heard of since.

Mrs. Mar. I saw her but now, as I came mask'd through the Park, in conference with Mirabell.

Lady W. With Mirabell! You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence. I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which, if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruin'd. Oh, my friend, I'm a wretch of wretches, if I'm detected!

Mrs. Mar. Oh, Madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. Foible's integrity.

Lady W. Oh, he carries poison in his tongue, that would corrupt integrity itself! If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah, dear Marwood! what's integrity to an opportunity?—Hark! I hear her. Dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom. You'll pardon me, dear friend, I can make bold with you. There are books over the chimney; Quarles and Pryn, and the Short View of the Stage, with Bunyan's Works, to entertain you.—Go, you thing, and send her in. [*To Peg.*

Enter Foible.

Lady W. Oh, Foible! where hast thou been? What hast thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have seen the party.

Lady W. But what hast thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, and are to do; I have only promised. But a man so enamoured—so transported! Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—Poor Sir Rowland, I say.

Lady W. The miniature has been counted like. But hast thou not betrayed me, Foible? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell? What hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me, has he got nthing out of thee?

Foib. So, the devil has been beforehand with me. What shall I say?—Alas, Madam, could I help it, if I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he used me, and all upon your ladyship's account, I am sure you would not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst, I could have borne; but he had a sting at your ladyship too; and then I could not hold; but, i'faith, I gave him his own.

Lady W.

Lady W. Me! What did the filthy fellow say?

Foib. Oh, Madam, 'tis a shame to say what he said!—With his taunts, and his fleers, tossing up his nose—Humph, (says he) what, are you hatching some plot, (says he) you are so early abroad? Or catering (says he) ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant. Half-pay is but thin subsistence (says he)—Well, what pension does your lady propose?—Let me see (says he)—what, she must come down pretty deep, now; she's superannuated, (says he) and——

Lady W. Ods my life! I'll have him—I'll have him murdered, I'll have him poisoned. Where does he eat? I'll marry a drawer, to have him poisoned in his wine. I'll send for Robin from Locket's immediately.

Foib. Poison him! poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, Madam, starve him; marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. Oh, you would bless yourself to hear what he said!

Lady W. A villain! Superannuated!

Foib. Humph, (says he) I hear you are laying designs against me too, (says he) and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle; (he does not suspect a word of your ladyship) but (says he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you (says he). I'll hamper you for that, (says he) and you and your old frippery too (says he). I'll handle you——

Lady W. Audacious villain! handle me! Would he durst—Frippery! old frippery! Was there ever such a foul-mouth'd fellow? I'll be marry'd to-morrow; I'll be contracted to-night.

Foib. The sooner the better, Madam.

Lady W. Will Sir Rowland be here, say'st thou? When, Foible?

Foib. Incontinently, Madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband, after knighthood, with that impatience with which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladyship's hand after dinner.

Lady W. Frippery! superannuated frippery! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags; a tatterdemalion. Yes, he shall have my niece, with her fortune, he shall.

Foib. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first,
D 3 and

and angle into Black Friars for brass farthings, with an old mitten.

Lady W. Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any oeconomy of face. This wretch has fretted me, that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

Foib. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, Madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white varnish.

Lady W. Let me see the glass—Cracks, say'st thou? Why, I am errantly flead. I look like an old peel'd wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

Foib. I warrant you, Madam: a little art once made your picture like you; and now, a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must fit for you, Madam.

Lady W. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? Or will he not fail when he does come; Will he be importunate, Foible, 'and push?' For if he should not be importunate, I shall never break decorums. I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to make advances. 'Oh, no, I can never advance. I shall swoon, if he should expect advances.' No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred, than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy, neither; I won't give him despair. But a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

Foib. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

Lady W. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—A sort of a dyingness. You see that picture has a sort of a—Ha, Foible! a swimmingness in the eyes—Yes, I'll look so—My niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed; I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me; I won't know; I'll be surprised; be taken by surprise.

Foib. By storm, Madam. Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

Lady W. Is he? Oh, then, he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorums, if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending

offending against decorums. Oh, I'm glad he's a brisk man! Let my things be removed, good Foible. [*Exit.*]

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. Oh, Foible! I have been in a fright, lest I should come too late. That devil, Marwood, saw you in the Park with Mirabell, and, I'm afraid, will discover it to my Lady.

Foib. Discover what, Madam?

Mrs. Fain. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face. I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and, as such, winning my Lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

Foib. Oh, dear Madam, I beg your pardon! It was not my confidence in your ladyship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladyship and Mr. Mirabell, might have hindered his communicating this secret.

Mrs. Fain. Dear Foible, forget that.

Foib. Oh, dear Madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet, winning gentleman! But your ladyship is the pattern of generosity. Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr. Mirabell cannot choose but be grateful. I find your ladyship has his heart still. Now, Madam, I can safely tell your ladyship our success. Mrs. Marwood has told my Lady; but I warrant I managed myself. I turned it all for the better. I told my Lady, that Mr. Mirabell railed at her; I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my Lady is so incensed, that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says. I warrant I worked her up, that he may have her for asking for, 'as they say of a Welch maidenhead.'

Mrs. Fain. Oh, rare Foible!

Foib. Madam, I beg your ladyship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him; besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me. She has a month's mind; but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her—[*Calls.*—] John, remove my Lady's toilet. Madam, your servant. My Lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me, if I stay.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fain. I'll go with you up the back stairs, lest I should meet her. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, Mrs. Engine! is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. 'Why, this wench is the *pass-par-tout*, a very master-key to every body's strong box.' My friend, Fainall, have you carried it so swammingly? 'I thought there was something in it: but it seems it's over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite, then, but from a surfeit; else you could never be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant; to procure for him! a pattern of generosity that, I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your match. Oh, man, man! woman, woman! The devil's an ass. If I were a painter I would draw him like an idiot, a driveler, with bib and bells. Man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend!'—Madam Marwood has a month's mind; but he can't abide her. 'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair, without you could have kept his counsel closer. 'I shall not prove another pattern of generosity. He has not obliged me with those excesses of himself; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chymist upon the day of projection.

Enter Lady Withfort.

'*Lady W.* Oh, dear Marwood! what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness? But my dear friend is all goodness.

'*Mrs. Mar.* No apologies, dear Madam; I have been very well entertained.

'*Lady W.* As I'm a person, I am in a very chaos, to think I should so forget myself; but I have such an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do—[*Calls.*]—Foible!—I expect my nephew, Sir Wilfull, every moment, too—Why, Foible!—He means to travel for improvement.

'*Mrs. Mar.* Methinks Sir Wilfull should rather think of marrying than travelling, at his years. I hear he is turned of forty.

'*Lady*

Lady W. Oh, he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels, I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquired discretion to choose for himself.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Mrs. Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

Lady W. I promise you, I have thought on't; and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you, I will; I value your judgment extremely. On my word, I'll propose it.

Enter Foible.

Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner—I must make haste.

Foib. Mr. Witwoud and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladyship.

Lady W. Oh, dear! I can't appear till I'm dress'd. Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain them? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me. [*Ex. Foible and Lady W.*]

Enter Mrs. Millamant and Mincing.

Milla. Sure never any thing was so unbred as that odious man——Marwood, your servant.

Mrs. Mar. You have a colour; what's the matter?

Milla. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provoked me into a flame——I have broke my fan——Mincing, lend me yours. Is not all the powder cut of my hair?

Mrs. Mar. No. What has he done?

Milla. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talked——Nay, he has said nothing, neither; but he has contradicted every thing that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he would have quarrelled.

Minc. I vow, Mem, I thought once they would have fit.

Milla. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of choosing one's acquaintance, as one does one's cloaths.

Mrs. Mar. If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, tho' never so good, as we are of one suit, tho' never so fine: a fool and a dolly stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Milla. I could consent to wear them, if they would wear

‘ wear alike ; but fools never wear out—They are such
 ‘ *drap-de-berry* things ! Without one could give them to
 ‘ one’s chambermaid, after a day or two.’

Mrs. Mar. ‘ ’Twere better so indeed. Or what think
 ‘ you of the play-house ? A fine, gay, glossy fool should
 ‘ be given there, like a new masking habit after the mas-
 ‘ querade is over, and we have done with the disguise ;
 ‘ for a fool’s visit is always a disguise, and never admitted
 ‘ by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover
 ‘ of sense.’ If you would but appear barefaced now, and
 own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and
 Witwoud, as your hood and scarf. And indeed ’tis time ;
 for the town has found it : ‘ the secret is grown too big
 ‘ for the pretence : ’tis like Mrs. Primley’s great belly ;
 ‘ she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her
 ‘ hips. Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it,
 ‘ than my Lady Strammel can her face, that goodly face,
 ‘ which, in defiance to her Rhenish-wine tea, will not be
 ‘ comprehended in a mask.’

Milla. I’ll take my death, Marwood, you are more
 censorious than a decayed beauty, or a discarded toast—
 Mincing, tell the men they may come up. My aunt is
 not dressing here. Their folly is less provoking than your
 malice. [Exit Minc.

The town has found it ! What has found it ? That Mira-
 bell loves me is no more a secret, than it is a secret that
 you discovered it to my aunt, or than the reason why you
 discovered it is a secret.

Mrs. Mar. You are nettled.

Milla. You are mistaken. Ridiculous !

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, my dear, you’ll tear another lap,
 if you don’t mitigate those violent airs.

Milla. Oh, silly ! Ha, ha, ha ! I could laugh immo-
 derally. Poor Mirabell ! his constancy to me has quite
 destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside. I
 swear, I never enjoin’d it him to be so coy. If I had the
 vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him
 to shew more gallantry. ’Tis hardly well bred, to be so
 particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other.
 But I despair to prevail ; so let him follow his own way.
 Ha, ha, ha ! Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh ;
 ha,

ha, ha, ha! tho', I grant you, 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. What pity 'tis, so much raillery, and delivered with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

Milla. Ha! dear creature, I ask your pardon; I swear, I did not mind you.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you——

Milla. Oh, dear! what? For it is the same thing if I hear it. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. That I detest him, hate him, Madam.

Milla. Oh, Madam! why, so do I. And yet the creature loves me, ha, ha, ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it? I am a Sybil, if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer, and within a year or two as young. If you could but stay for me, I should overtake you—But that cannot be—Well, that thought makes me melancholic—Now I'll be sad.

Mrs. Mar. Your merry note may be changed sooner than you think.

Milla. D'ye say so? 'Then I'm resolved I'll have a song, to keep up my spirits.'—*But here come the gentlemen.*

Enter Mincing.

Minc. The gentlemen stay but to comb, Madam; and will wait on you.

Milla. Desire Mrs.——, that is in the next room, to sing the song I would have learnt yesterday—You shall hear it, Madam—Not that there's any great matter in it; but 'tis agreeable to my humour.

SONG.

- ' Love's but the frailty of the mind,
- ' When 'tis not with ambition join'd;
- ' A flickly flame, which, if not fed, expires;
- ' And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires.
- ' 'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
- ' Or am'rous youth, that gives the joy;
- ' But 'tis the glory to have pierc'd a swain,
- ' For whom inferior beauties sigh'd in vain.

' Then

- ' Then I alone the conquest prize,
 ' When I insult a rival's eyes :
 ' If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
 ' That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Enter Petulant and Witwoud.

Milla. Is your animosity compos'd, gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, raillery, Madam; we have no animosity—We hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity—The falling out of wits is like the falling out of lovers——We agree in the main, like treble and base. Ha, Petulant?

Pet. Ay, in the main——But when I have a humour to contradict——

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battle-dores: for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black's black—if I have a humour to say 'tis blue——Let that pass——All's one for that. If I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must——But it may——may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, Madam.

Mrs. Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs. Mar. That's a sign indeed 'tis no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no; 'tis no enemy to any body, but them that have it.

Milla. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion: I wonder at the impudence of any illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Milla. Ah! to marry an ignorant! that can hardly read or write.

Pet.

Pet. Why should a man be any farther from being married, tho' he can't read, than he is from being hang'd. The ordinary's paid for setting the psalm, and the parish-priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book——So all's one for that.

Misa. D'ye hear the creature? Lord, here's company, I'll be gone. [Exit.]

Enter Sir Wilfull Witwoud, in a riding-dress, and a Footman.

Wit. In the name of Bartholomew and his fair, what have we here?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I——Yes, I think it is he——I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the coronation.

Foot. Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you please to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir Wil. Dressing! What, 'tis but morning here, I warrant; with you in London: we shou'd count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire——Why then belike my aunt han't din'd yet——Ha, friend!

Foot. Your aunt, Sir?

Sir Wil. My aunt, Sir! yes, my aunt, Sir; and your lady, Sir; your lady is my aunt, Sir——Why, what dost thou not know me, friend? Why then send some body hither that does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow, ha?

Foot. A week, Sir; longer than any body in the house, except my lady's woman.

Sir Wil. Why then belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou seest her, ha, friend?

Foot. Why truly, Sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in the morning, before she is dress'd; 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

Sir Wil. Well, pr'ythee try what thou canst do, if thou canst not guess; enquire her out, dost hear, fellow? And tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is in the house.

Foot. I shall, Sir.

Sir Wil. Hold ye, hear me, friend; a word with you in your ear; pr'ythee who are these gallants?

Foot. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. [Exit.]

Sir Wil. Oons this fellow knows less than a starling; I don't think a'knows his own name.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behind-hand in forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope so——The devil take him that remembers first, I say.

Sir Wil. Save you, gentlemen and lady.

Mrs. Mar. For shame, Mr. Witwoud: why won't you speak to him?——And you, Sir.

Wit. Petulant, speak.

Pet. And you, Sir.

Sir Wil. No offence, I hope. [Salutes Marwood.]

Mrs. Mar. No sure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence! Ha, ha, ha! to him; to him, Petulant; smoke, him.

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, Sir; hem, hem. [Surveying him round.]

Sir Wil. Very likely, Sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, Sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots: Petulant, the boots; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Wil. May be not, Sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, Sir.

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir Wil. Why, 'tis like you may, Sir: if you are not satisfy'd with the information of my boots, Sir, if you will step to the stable, you may enquire further of my horse, Sir.

Pet. Your horse, Sir! Your horse is an ass, Sir?

Sir Wil. Do you speak by way of offence, Sir?

Mrs. Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir—S'lfe we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass, before they find one another out. [Aside.] You must not take any thing amiss from your friends, Sir. You are among your friends here, though it may be you don't know it—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

Sir Wil. Right, Lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud;
so

so I write myself; no offence to any body, I hope; and nephew to the lady Wishfort of this mansion.

Mrs. Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, Sir?

Sir Wil. Hum! What, sure 'tis not——Yea, by'r lady, but 'tis——'Sheart I know not whether 'tis or no——Yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin. Brother Antony! what Tony, i'faith! What dost thou not know me? By'r lady flor I thee, thou art so becravatted, and so beperiwig'd——'Sheart why dost not speak? Art thou overjoy'd?

Wit. Odsso, brother, is it you? Your servant, brother.

Sir Wil. Your servant! Why yours, Sir. Your servant again——'Sheart, and your friend and servant to that——And a——[pugh] and flap dragon for your service, Sir: and a hare's foot, and a hare's scut for your service, Sir? an you be so cold and so courtly?

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much offence——A pox! is this your inns o'court-breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters?

Wit. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town. You think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers flabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants——'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

Sir Wil. The fashion's a fool, and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this——By'r lady I conjectur'd you were a fop, since you began to change the stile of your letters, and write in a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a Subpoena. I might expect this when you left off, Honoured brother; and hoping you are in good health, and so forth——To begin with a, Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of last night's debauch,——Ods heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude——You could write news before you were out of your time, when you liv'd with honest Pumble-nose the attorney of Furnival's Inn——You cou'd intreat to be remember'd then to your friends round the Wrekin. We could have

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Gazettes then, and Dawk's letter, and the weekly bill, 'till of late days.

Pet. 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? Of the family of the Furnivals. Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while. Not long, not long. Pshaw, I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian. Ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have serv'd your time; and now you may set up for yourself.

Mrs. Mar. You intend to travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir Wil. Belike I may, Madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

Pat. And the wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask licence of you, Sir; nor the weather-cock your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, Sir; 'tis like my aunt may have told you, Madam——Yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how the peace holds, whereby that is taxes abate.

Mrs. Mar. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures,

Sir Wil. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution—because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand, still I shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do't: but I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your Lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have spice of your French, as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

Mrs. Mar. Here's an academy in town for that use.

Sir Wil. Is there? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs. Mar. No doubt you will return very much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, refin'd like a Dutch skipper from a whale-fishing.

Enter

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Enter ' Lady Wishfort and' Fainall.

' *Lady W.* Nephew, you are welcome.

' *Sir Wil.* Aunt, your servant.

' *Fain.* Sir Wilfull, your most faithful servant.

' *Sir Wil.* Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

' *Lady W.* Cousin Witwoud, your servant; Mr. Petulant, your servant—Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any thing after your journey, nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almost ready.

' *Sir Wil.* I'm very well, I thank you, aunt—However, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart I was afraid you wou'd have been in the fashion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your relations. Here's your cousin Tony, belike, I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence.

' *Lady W.* O he's a railer, nephew—My cousin's a wit: and your great wits always rally their best friends to choose. When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better.

[*Fain. and Mrs. Marwood talks apart.*]

' *Sir Wil.* Why then let him hold his tongue in the mean time, and rail when that day comes.'

Enter Mincing.

Minc. Gentlemen, I come to acquaint you that dinner is impatient, and my lady waits.

Sir Wil. Impatient! Why then belike it won't stay 'till I pull off my boots. Sweetheart, can you help me to a pair of slippers?—My man's with his horses, I warrant.

Mincing. Fy, fy, Sir, you wou'd not pull off your boots here; you must go down into the hall.

' *Lady W.* Dinner shall stay for you. My nephew's little unbred, you'll pardon him. Gentlemen, will you walk? Marwood?

Mrs. Mar. I'll follow you, Madam, before Sir Wilfull is ready.

[*Exeunt.*]

Fain. Why then Foible's a bawd, an errant, rank, match-making bawd. And I, it seems, I am a husband, a rank, husband; and my wife a very errant, rank-wife,—all in the Way of the World. 'Sdeath, to be a cuckold by anticipation, a cuckold in embryo! 'Sure I was born with budding antlers, like a young satyr, or a citizen's child.'

'child.' 'Sdeath to be out-witted, to be out-jilted — out-matrimony'd — If I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat — but to crawl after, with my horns like a snail, and be out-stripp'd by my wife — 'tis scurvy wedlock.

Mrs. Mar. Then shake it off, you have often wish'd for an opportunity to part ; — and now you have it. But first prevent their plot — the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. Damn him, that had been mine — had you not made that fond discovery — That had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my horns, by that increase of fortune ; I cou'd have worn 'em tipt with gold, tho' my forehead had been furnish'd like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

Mrs. Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife ; ' and she's no worse than when you had her. I dare swear she had given up her game before she was married.

Fain. Hum ! — That may be.

Mrs. Mar. You married her to keep you ; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended.

Fain. The means ! the means !

Mrs. Mar. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct ; threaten to part with her — My lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece, and fortune, and all at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm ; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith, this has an appearance.

Mrs. Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull, that may be an obstacle.

Fain. Oh, for that matter, leave me to manage him ; I'll disable him for that. He will drink like a Dane : after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards the lady?

Fain. Why faith, I'm thinking of it—Let me see—
I am married already, so that's over—My wife has played the jade with me—Well, that's over too—I never loved her, or if I had, why that would have been over too by this time—Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy—Weary of her I am, and shall be—No, there's no end of that; no, no, that were too much to hope—Thus far concerning my repose—Now for my reputation—As to my own, I married not for it; so that's out of the question—And as to my part in my wife's—Why; she had parted with her's, before, so bringing none to me, she can take none from me; 'tis against all rule of play, that I should lose to one who has not wherewithal to stake.

Mrs. Mar. Besides, you forget; marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum! faith, and that's well thought on; marriage is honourable, as you say; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being derived from so honourable a root?

Mrs. Mar. Nay, I know not; if the root be honourable, why not the branches?

Fain. So, so; why this point's clear—Well, how do we proceed?

Mrs. Mar. I will contrive a letter, which shall be delivered to my lady at the time when that rascal, who is to act Sir Rowland, is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provoked, if I could help it—because you know she knows some passages—Nay, I expect all will come out—But let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discovered.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst—I'll turn my wife to grass—I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate; which I wheedled out of her; and that you shall partake at least.

Mrs. Mar. I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now; you'll be no more jealous?

Fain.

Fain. Jealous, no——by this kiss——let husbands be jealous; but let the lover still believe; ‘or, if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true: but let husband’s doubts convert to endless jealousy; or, if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition, and blind credulity;’ I am single, and will herd no more with them. True, I wear the badge, but I’ll disown the order. And since I take my leave of them, I care not if I leave them a common motto to their common crest.

All husbands must, or pain, or shame, endure;
The wise too jealous are, fools too secure.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE *continues.*

Lady Wishfort and Foible.

LADY WISHFORT.

IS Sir Rowland coming, say’st thou, Foible? and are things in order?

Foib. Yes, Madam. I have put wax lights in the sconces; and placed the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postillion to fill up the equipage.

Lady W. Have you pulvilled the coachman and postillion, that they may not stink of the stable, when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foib. Yes, Madam.

Lady W. And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained in all points with correspondence to his passion?

Foi. All is ready, Ma’am.

Lady W. And——well——and how do I look, Foible?

Foi. Most killing well, Madam.

Lady W. Well, and how shall I receive him? In what figure shall I give his heart the first impresson? There is a great deal in the first impresson. Shall I fit?——No, I won’t fit——I’ll walk——ay, I’ll walk from the door upon

upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him—
 No, that will be too sudden—I'll lie, ay, I'll lie down
 —I'll receive him in my little dressing-room, there's a
 couch—Yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a
 couch—I won't lie neither, but loll and lean upon one
 elbow; with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a
 thoughtful way—Yes—and then as soon as he ap-
 pears, start; ay, start, and be surprised, and rise to meet
 him in a pretty disorder—Yes—Oh, nothing is more
 alluring than a levee from a couch in some confusion
 —It shews the foot to advantage, and furnishes with
 blushes, and recomposing airs beyond comparison. Hark!
 There's a coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, Madam.

Lady W. Oh, dear, has my nephew made his addresses
 to Millamant? I ordered him.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is set in to drinking, Madam, in the
 parlour.

Lady W. Od's my life, I'll send him to her. Call her
 down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go.
 When they are together, then come to me, Foible; that I
 may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland.

[*Exit Lady W.*]

Enter Mrs. Millamant and Mrs. Fain.

Foib. Madam, I stayed here, to tell your ladyship that
 Mr. Mirabell has waited this half hour for an opportu-
 nity to talk with you. Though my lady's orders were to
 leave you and Sir Wilfull together, Shall I tell Mr. Mi-
 rabell that you are at leisure?

Milla. No—What would the dear man have? I am
 thoughtful, and would amuse myself—Bid him come
 another time.

There never yet was woman made,

Nor shall, but to be curs'd.

[*Repeating and walking about.*]

"That's hard!

Mrs. Fain. You are very fond of Sir Jack Suckling to-
 day, Millamant, and the poets.

Milla. He? Ay, and filthy verses—So I am.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is coming, Madam. Shall I send Mrs
 Mirabell away?

Milla. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away—

Or

Or send him hither——just as you will, dear Foible——
I think I'll see him—Shall I? Ay, let the wretch come.

Thyrfis, a youth of the inspired train. [*Repeating.*
Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull——Thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool; thou art married and hast patience——I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs. Fain. I am obliged to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

Enter Sir Wilfull.

Mrs. Fain. Oh, Sir Wilfull; you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point, now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my aunt will have it so——I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I'm acquainted: [*This while Millamant walks about repeating to herself.*]——But I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind——that is, upon further acquaintance——So for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave——If so be, you'll be so kind to make my excuse; I'll return to my company——

Mrs. Fain. Oh, fy, Sir Wilfull? What, you must not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted! No, that's not it; it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient 'till further acquaintance, that's all——your servant.

Mrs. Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door. [*Exit Fain.*

Sir Wil. Nay, nay, cousin—I have forgot my gloves——What d'ye do? 'Sheart a'has locked the door indeed, I think——Nay, cousin Fainall, open the door——Psha! what a vixen trick is this?——Nay, now a'has seen me too——Cousin, I made bold to pass through as it were——I think this door's enchanted——

Milla. [*Repeating.*]

I pr'ythee spare me, gentle boy,

Press me no more for that slight toy.

Sir Wil. Anan? Cousin, your servant.

Milla. That foolish trifle of a heart——Sir Wilfull?

Sir Wil. Yes——your servant. No offence, I hope, cousin.

Milla.

Milla. [*Repeating.*]

I swear it will do its part,

Tho' thou dost thine, employ't thy power and art.

Natural, easy Suckling!

Sir Wil. Anan! Suckling! No such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank Heaven, I'm no minor.

Milla. Ah, rustic, ruder than Gothic.

Sir Wil. Well, well, I shall understand your Lingo one of these days, cousin; in the mean while I must answer in plain English.

Milla. Have you any business with me, Sir Wilfull?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know, if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening, if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have fought a walk with you.

Milla. A walk? What then?

Sir Wil. Nay, nothing—Only for the walk's sake, that's all—

Milla. I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion; I loathe the country, and every thing that relates to it.

Sir Wil. Indeed! Hah! Look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may—Here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like, that must be confessed indeed—

Milla. Ah, *Petourdie*! I hate the town too.

Sir Wil. Dear heart, that's much.—Hah! that you should hate 'em both! Hah! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin..

Milla. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, 'tis like I may—You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin—'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess—However, that's as time shall try—But spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

Milla. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me: I have just now a little business.—

Sir Wil. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case—When you're disposed, when you're disposed. Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now.

All's one for that—Yes, yes, if your concerns call yth, there's no haste; it will keep cold as they say—Cousin, your servant—I think this door's locked.

Milla. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir Wil. Your servant, then with your leave I'll return to my company.

Milla. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit Sir Wil.*]

Like *Phœbus* sung the no less am'rous boy.

Enter Mirabell.

Mira.—Like *Daphne* she, as lovely and as coy.

Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my search more curious? Or, is this pretty artifice contrived, to signify that here the chace must end, and my pursuit be crowned, for you can fly no farther?—

Milla. Vanity! No——I'll fly and be followed to the last moment; though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the gate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, pay, and afterwards.

Mira. What, after the last?

Milla. 'Oh, if I should think I was poor, and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduced to an inglorious ease, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation..

Mir. But don't you know, that when favours are conferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure.

Milla. It may be in things of common application; but never sure in love—Oh, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the saucy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air. Ah, I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mira. Would you have 'em both before marriage? Or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other 'till after grace?

Milla. Ah! don't be impertinent——My dear liberty,

erty, should I leave thee? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ah! adieu—My morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin* adieu.—I can't doubt, 'tis more than impossible—Positively, Mirabell, I'll lie a-bed in a morning as long as I please.

Mira. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Milla. Ay! idle creature, get up when you will—And, d'ye hear, I won't be call'd names after I'm married, positively. I won't be called names.

Mira. Names!

Milla. Ay; as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweet-heart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—I shall never bear that—Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my lady Faddle and Sir Francis: nor go to Hyde Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers, and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well-bred: let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well-bred as if we were not married at all.

Mir. Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

Milla. Trifles—As liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please; and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my closet invaded; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles sub-

scribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

Mira. Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions — That when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband.

Milla. You have free leave; propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Imprimis* then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidant, or intimate of your own sex; ‘no she friend’ — ‘to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy;’ no decoy-duck to wheedle you a sop-scambling to the play in a mask — Then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out — And rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolic which you had to pick me up and prove my constancy.

Milla. Detestable *imprimis*! I go to the play in a mask!

Mira. *Item*, I article, that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall: and while it passes current with me, that you endeavour not to new-coin it. To which end, together with all the vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oiled skins, and I know not what — Hogs bones, hare’s gall, pig water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. *Item*, I shut my doors against all bawds with baskets, and penny-worths of muslin, china, fans, Atlasses, &c. — *Item*, when you shall be breeding —

Milla. Ah, name it not.

Mira. Which may be presumed, with a blessing on our endeavours —

Milla. Odious endeavours!

Mira. I denounce against all straight lacing, squeezing for a shape, till you mould my boy’s head like a sugar-loaf; and instead of a man child make me father to a crooked-brat. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea table I submit — But with proviso, that you exceed not in your province: but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee. As likewise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk — Such as mending

mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth——But that on no account you encroach upon the men's prerogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea table, as orange brandy, all anniseed, cinnamon, citron and Barbadoes waters, together with ratafia, and the most noble spirit of clary.——But for cowslip wine, poppy water, and all dormitives, those I allow——These proviso's admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

Milla. Oh, horrid proviso's! filthy strong waters! I toast fellows! Odious men! I hate your odious proviso's.

Mira. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Milla. Fainall, what shall I do? Shall I have him? I think I must have him.

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him; what should you do?

Milla. Well then——I'll take my death, I'm in a horrid fright——Fainall, I shall never say it——Well——I think——I'll endure you.

Mrs. Fain. Fy, fy, have him; have him, and tell him so in plain terms: for I am sure you have a mind to him.

Milla. Are you? I think I have——and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too——Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you——I won't be kissed, nor I won't be thanked——Here, kiss my hand though——So, hold your tongue now, don't say a word.

Mrs. Fain. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience;——'You have neither time to talk nor stay: my mother is coming; and in my conscience, if she should see you, would fall into fits, and may be not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed.' Therefore spare you extasies for another occasion, and slip down the back stairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

Milla. Ay, ay, go. In the mean time I'll suppose you have said something to please me.

60 THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Mrs. I am all obedience. [Exit.]

Mrs. Fain. Yonder Sir Wilfull's drunk, and so noisy, that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking—What they may have done by this time I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mills. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing—for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. Fain. So it seems; for you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had best take up with Sir Wilfull.

Mills. How can you name that superannuated lubber? Poth!

Enter Witwoud from drinking.

Mrs. Fain. So, is the fray made up, that you have left them?

Wit. Left them! I could stay no longer—I have laughed like ten christenings—I am tipsy with laughing—If I had staid any longer I should have burst—I must have been let out and pieced in the sides like an unfixed camblet—Yes, yes, the fray is composed, my lady came in like a *noli prosequi*, and stopped the proceedings.

Mills. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage, and so fell a sputtering at one another like two roasting apples.

Enter Petulant drunk.

Now, Petulant, all's over, all's well. Gad, my head begins to whim it about—Why dost thou not speak? Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. Millamant—if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—Pass on, or pass off—that's all.

Wit. Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *declmo scato*, my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwoud—You are an annihilator of sense.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincushions—

Thou

Thou art, in truth, (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of short hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half brother, is the rest — A Gemini of asses split wou'd make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. Stand off — I'll kiss no more males — I have kiss'd your twin yonder in a humour of reconciliation, till he (*hiccup*s) rises upon my stomach like a raddish.

Milla. Eh! filthy creature — What was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel — There might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have express'd provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Milla. Me!

Pet. If I have a humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises — If you are not handsome, what then; if I have a humour to prove it? If I shall have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face the next time yourself — I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thyself up like a wood-louse, and dream revenge — And, hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge — I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider — go flea dogs, and read romances — I'll go to bed to my maid.

Mrs. Fain. He's horridly drunk — How came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight — Your husband's advice, but he sneak'd off.

Enter Sir Wilfull drunk; and Lady Wishfort.

Lady W. Out upon't! out upon't! at years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate.

Sir Wil. No offence, aunt.

Lady W. Offence! As I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you — Fough! how you stink of wine! D'ye think my niece will ever endure such a Borachio! you're an absolute Borachio!

Sir Wil. Borachio!

Lady W. At a time when you shou'd commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost——

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, an you grudge me your liquor, make a bill—— Give me more drink, and take my purse.

S O N G.

Pry'thee fill me the glafs
'Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
He that whines for a lasa
Is an ignorant ass,
For a bumper has not its fellow.

But if you wou'd have me marry my cousin—— Say the word, and I'll do't—— Wilfull will do't, that's the word—— Wilfull will do't, that's my crest—— my motto I have forgot.

Lady W. My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin—but 'tis with drinking your health—— O' my word you are oblig'd to him.

Sir Wil. *In vino veritas*, aunt:—— If I drink your health to-day, cousin—I am a Borachio. But if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilfull will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round—— Tony! Ods heart where's Tony?—Tony's an honest fellow, but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.

Sings. We'll drink and we'll never have done, boys,
Put the glafs then around with the fun, boys,
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk ev'ry night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.

The sun's a good pimple, an honest foaker, he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at the Antipodes—your Antipodes are a good rascally sort of topsy-turvy fellows—If I had a bumper I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to 'em—A match or no match, cousin, with the hard name—Aunt, Wilfull will do't. ' If she has her maidenhead, let her look

'Look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the mean time, and cry out at the nine month's end.'

Milla. Your pardon, Madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Egh! how he smells! I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, cousin,

[*Exeunt Milla. and Mrs. Fain,*

Lady W. Smells! he would poison a tallow-chandler and his family. Beastly creature! I know not what to do with him.—Travel, quotha! ay, travel, travel, get thee gone; get thee but far enough; to the Saracens or the Tartars, or the Turks, for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly Pagan.

Sir Wil. Turks! no, no, Turks, aunt; your Turks are Infidels, and believe not in the grape; your Mahometan, your Mussulman is a dry stinkard—No offence, aunt. My map says, that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian. I cannot find by the map, that your Musti is orthodox; whereby it is a plain case, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and (*biccups*) Greek for claret.

Sings. To drink is a Christian diversion
Unknown to the Turk and the Persian;
Let Mahometan fools
Live by Heathenish rules,
And be damn'd over tea-cups and coffee,
But let British lads sing
Crown a health to the King,
And a fig for your Sultan and Sophy.

Ah, Tony!

[*Enter Foible. and whispers Lady Withford.*

Lady W. Sir Rowland impatient! Good lack! what shall I do with this beastly rumbril?—Go lie down and sleep, you sot—Or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinado'd with broom-sticks. Call up the wenches with broom-sticks.

Sir Wil. Ahey! wenches: where are the wenches?

Lady W. Dear cousin Witwoud: get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation—
You will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit.

Wit. Come, knight—Pox on him, I don't know what to say to him—Will you go to a cock-match?

Sir Wit. With a wench, Tony? Is she a shake-bag, firrah? Let me bite your cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! he has a breath like a bagpipe—Ay, ey, come, will you march, my Salopian?

Sir Wil. Lead on, little Tony—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tantony. Sirrah, thou shalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy Pig.

—And a fig for your Sultan and Sophy.

[*Exeunt Sir Wil. and Wit.*]

Lady W. This will never do. It will never make a match:—at least before he has been abroad.

Enter Waitwell disguis'd as for Sir Rowland.

Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness—I have more pardons to ask than the Pope distributes in the year of Jubilee. But I hope where there is likely to be so near an alliance—we may unbend the severity of decorum—and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, Madam, is the effect of my transport—And till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantaliz'd on the rack; and do but hang, Madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady W. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland; and press things to a conclusion, with a most prevailing vehemence.—But a day or two for decency of marriage—

Wait. For decency of funeral, Madam. The delay will break my heart—or, if that should fail, I shall be poisoned. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me—and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction—That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be reveng'd on that unnatural viper.

Lady W. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly, I would contribute much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment of your revenge—Not that I respect myself; tho' he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady W.

Lady W. O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away, at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and the tremblings, the ardours and the extasies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the hand-gripings, the pangs and the pathetic regards of his protesting eyes! Oh, no memory can register.

Wait. What, my rival! Is the rebel my rival?—a dies.

Lady W. No don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, starve him gradually inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be barefoot; in a month out at knees with begging an alms—He shall starve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle's end upon a save-all.

Lady W. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way——You are no novice in the labyrinth of love—You have the clue——But as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite——I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials.

Wait. Far be it from me——

Lady W. If you do, I protest I must recede——or think that I have made a prostitution of decorum; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance.

Wait. I esteem it so.

Lady W. Or else you wrong my condescension——

Wait. I do not, I do not——

Lady W. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue.

Lady W. If thou think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient——

Wait. Dear Madam, No. You are all camphire and frankincense, all chastity and odour.

Lady W. Or that——

Enter Foible.

Foib. Madam, 'The dancers are ready, and' there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

Lady W.

Lady W. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honour's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly.

[*Exit Lady W.*

Wait. Fy, fy!—What a slavery have I undergone? spouse, hast thou any cordial? I want spirits.

Foib. What a wally rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a fine lady?

Wait. O, she is the antidote to desire. 'Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't—I shall have no appetite to 'iteration of nuptials—this eight and forty hours.' By this hand, I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days, than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow.

Re-enter Lady Wishfort, with a letter.

Lady W. 'Call in the dancers;—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. [*Dance.*'] Now, with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy, I would burn it—speak, if it does—but you may see the superscription is like a woman's hand.

Foib. By heaven! Mrs. Marwood's, I know it—my heart akes—Get it from her—

[*To him.*

Wait. A woman's hand! No, Madam, that's no woman's hand, I see that already. That's some body whose throat must be cut.

Lady W. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion, by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return, by a frank communication—you shall see it—we'll open it together—look you here. [*Reads.*] "Madam, though unknown to you," Look you there, 'tis from no body that I know.—"I have that honour for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a rascal." Oh heavens! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate, all's ruin'd.

Wait. How, how, let me see, let me see—[*Reading.*] "A rascal, and disguis'd and suborn'd for that imposture"—O villany! O villany! "by the contrivance of"—

Lady W.

Lady W. I shall faint, I shall die, oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your nephew's hand—Quickly, his plot, swear, swear it.—— [To him]

Wait. Here's a villain, Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you see it?

Lady W. Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand—A woman's hand! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand; your Roman hand—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him——

Foib. O treachery! But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

Wait. Sure! Am I here? do I live? Do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the same character.

Lady W. How!

Foib. O what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture! This was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguis'd to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me, and would have hid his face.

Lady W. How, how—I heard the villain was in the house, indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addresses.

Foib. Then, then Madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your ladyship to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough, his date is short.

Foib. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause—My lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

Lady W. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight; if you should be killed, I must never shew my face; 'O consider my reputation, Sir Rowland.—No, you shan't fight, I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess.'—I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

Wait.

Wait. I am charmed, Madam; I obey. But some proof you must let me give you. I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

Lady W. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort; bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract, to be signed this night? May I hope so far?

Lady W. Bring what you will; but come alive. Pray, come alive. 'Oh, this is a happy discovery!'

Wait. Dead or alive, I'll come; and married we will be, in spite of treachery; ay, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned nephew. Come, my buxom widow:

Ere long you shall substantial proof receive
That I'm an arrant knight——

Foib. ——Or arrant knave.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE continues.

Enter Lady Wishfort and Foible.

LADY WISHFORT.

OUT of my house, out of my house, thou viper, thou serpent, that I have fostered; thou bosom traitress, that I raised from nothing——Begone, begone, begone, go, go—that I took from washing of old gauze, and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose, over a chafing-dish of starv'd embers; and dining behind a traverse rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage. Go, go, starve again; do, do.

Foib. Dear Madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady W. Away; out, out; go, set up for yourself again, do; drive a trade, do, with your three-penny-worth of small ware, flaunting upon a pack-thread, under a brandy-seller's bulk, or against a dead wall, by a ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old fripponer gorget, with a yard of yellow colberteen again, do; an old gnawed

gnawed mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glass necklace, with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cap, with one ear; go, go, drive a trade. These were your commodities, you treacherous trull; this was the merchandise you dealt in, when I took you into my house, placed you next myself, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feathered your nest?

Foib. No; no; dear Madam. Do but hear me; have but a moment's patience; I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduced me. I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling tongue: your ladyship's own wisdom has been deluded by him; then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? Oh, Madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladyship should come to no damage! or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me.

Lady W. No damage! What, to betray me, to marry me to a cast serving-man; to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decayed pimp! No damage! Oh, thou frontless impudence, 'more than a big-bellied actresses!'

Foib. Pray, do but hear me, Madam. He could not marry your ladyship, Madam: no, indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law; for he was married to me first, to secure your ladyship. He could not have bedded your ladyship; for if he had consummated with your ladyship, he must have run the risque of the law, and been put upon his clergy—Yes, indeed, I enquired of the law, in that case, before I would meddle or make.

Lady W. What, then, I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems, while you were catèring for Mirabell. I have been broker for you. What, have you made a passive bawd of me? This exceeds all precedent. I am brought to fine uses, to be come a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigail and Andrews. I'll couple you; yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander. I'll Duke's-Place you, as I'm a person. Your turtle is in custody already: you shall coo in the same cage, if there be constable or warrant in the parish.

[*Exit.*
Foib.

Foib. Oh, that ever I was born ! Oh, that ever I was married !—A bride ! ay, I shall be a Bridewell bride. Oh !

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. Poor Foible ! what's the matter ?

Foib. Oh, Madam, my Lady's gone for a constable ! I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell, to beat hemp. Poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

Mrs. Fain. Have a good heart, Foible ; Mirabell is gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foib. Yes, I know it, Madam ; she was in my Lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my Lady ; and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers ; and in the mean time, Mrs. Marwood declared all to my Lady.

Mrs. Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the letter ? My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy : I fancy Marwood has not told her, tho' she has told my husband.

Foib. Yes, Madam ; but my Lady did not see that part : we lifted the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladyship, then ?

Mrs. Fain. Ay, all's out, my affair with Mirabell, every thing discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foib. Indeed, Madam, and so it is a comfort, if you knew all. He has been even with your ladyship ; which I could have told you long enough since ; but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will. I had rather bring friends together, than set them at a distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs. Fain. Sayst thou so, Foible ? Canst thou prove this ?

Foib. I can take my oath of it, Madam, so can Mrs. Mincing ; we have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber, one evening, when you were at Hyde Park ; and we were thought to have gone a walking ; but we went up unawares--Though we were sworn to secrecy too ; Madam
Marwood

Marwood took a book, and swore us upon it ; but it was but a book of poems : so long as it was not a bible-oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs. Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I could wish. Now, Mincing—

Enter Mincing.

Minc. My Lady would speak with Mrs. Foible, Mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her : he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my Lady's closet, till my old Lady's anger is abated. Oh, my old Lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said—He swears, and my old Lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, Mem, how that he'll have my Lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs. Fain. Does your Lady, or Mirabell, know that ?

Minc. Yes, Mem ; they have sent me to see if Sir Willfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My Lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pounds. Oh, come, Mrs. Foible ; I hear my old Lady.

Mrs. Fain. Foible, you must tell Mincing, that she must prepare to vouch, when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, Madam.

Minc. Oh, yes, Mem, I'll vouch any thing for your ladyship's service, be what it will. [*Ex. Foib. and Minc.*]

Enter Lady Wishfort and Marwood.

Lady W. Oh, my dear friend ! how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness ? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell ; to you I owe the detection of the impostor, Sir Rowland ; and now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honour of my house, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves, and be shepherdesses.

Mrs. Mar. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, Madam ; we shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

Lady W. Oh, daughter, daughter ! is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and, as I may say, another Me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue ? ' Is it possible ' you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in ' the direct mould of virtue ? I have not only been a ' mould, but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.'

Mrs. Fain. I don't understand your ladyship.

Lady W. Not understand ! Why, have you not been naught ? Have you not been sophisticated ? Not understand ! Here I am ruined to compound for your caprices and your cuckoldums. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough——

Mrs. Fain. I'm wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs. Mar. My friend, Mrs. Fainall ! Your husband my friend ! What do you mean ?

Mrs. Fain. I know what I mean, Madam, and so do you ; and so shall the world, at a time convenient.

Mrs. Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, Madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladyship and family, should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, Madam, if I meddle no more with an affair, in which I am not personally concerned.

Lady W. Oh, dear friend ! I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns——You ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature ! she deserves more from you, than all your life can accomplish. Oh, don't leave me destitute in this perplexity. No, stick to me, my good genius.

Mrs. Fain. I tell you, Madam, you're abused. Stick to you ! ay, like a leach, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defy them all. Let them prove their aspersions. I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial. [*Exit.*]

Lady W. Why, if she should be innocent ; if she should be

be wronged after all; ha?— I don't know what to think— And, I promise you, her education has been very unexceptionable. I may say it: for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men—ay, friend, she would ha' shriek'd, if she had but seen a man, till she was in her teens. As I'm a person, 'tis true. She was never suffered to play with a male child, tho' but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender. Oh, she never looked a man in the face, but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments, and his sleek face, 'till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twas much ~~she~~ should be deceived so long.

Lady W. I warrant you; or she would never have borne to have been catechized by him, and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings, where the lewd rebles squeak nothing but bawdy, and the basses roar blasphemy. Oh, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book! And can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore, and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a playhouse? Oh, dear friend, I can't believe it! No; no; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs. Mar. Prove it, Madam! what, and have your name prostituted in a public court: yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar, by a pack of bawling lawyers? To be ushered in with an O Yes of scandal; and have your case opened by an old fumbling lecher in a confus'd man-midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters, and quibblers by the statute; and become a jest, against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record, not even in Doomsday-book; to discompose the gravity of the bench; and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law-Latin; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard.

' and fidges off and on his cushion, as if he had swallowed
' cantharides, or sat upon cow-itch.'

Lady W. Oh, 'tis very hard!

' *Mrs. Mar.* And then to have my young revellers of
' the Temple take notes, like 'prentices at a conventicle,
' and after talk it over again in Commons, or before draw-
' ers in an eating-house.

' *Lady W.* Worse and worse!

Mrs. Mar. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here
'twere well. But it must, after this, be consigned by the
short-hand writers to the public press; and from thence
be transferred to the hands, nay, into the throats and
lungs of hawkers, ' with voices more licentious than the
' loud flounder-man's: ' and this you must hear till you
are stunned; nay, you must hear nothing else for some
days.

Lady W. Oh, 'tis insupportable! No, no, dear friend,
make it up, make it up; ~~ay, ay~~, I'll compound; I'll give
up all, myself and my all, ~~my niece and her all~~; any thing,
every thing for composition.

Mrs. Mar. Nay, ~~Madam~~, I advise nothing; I only lay
before you, as a friend, the inconveniencies which, per-
haps, you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall; if
he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be
glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than
condole with you.

Enter Fainall.

Lady W. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood.
No, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, Madam, I have suffered myself to be over-
come by the importunity of this lady, your friend; and
am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during
life, on condition you oblige yourself never to marry,
under such penalty as I think convenient.

Lady W. Never to marry!

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands—the next imposture may
not be so timely detected.

' *Mrs. Mar.* That condition, I dare answer, my Lady
' will consent to, without difficulty; she has already but
' too much experienced the perfidiousness of men. Be-
' sides, Madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude,
' we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

Lady

Lady W. Ay, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency——

Fain. Oh, if you are prescribed marriage, you shall be considered; I will only reserve to myself the power to choose for you. If your phyfic be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary.' Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

Lady W. This is most inhumanly savage; 'exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.'

Fain. 'I learned it from his Czarish majesty's retinue, in a winter evening's conference, over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively.' Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pounds, which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession; and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wrench) for her disobedience, in contracting herself without your consent or knowledge; and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

Lady W. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands——I'll hear no objections.

Lady W. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand till more sufficient deeds can be perfected; which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while, I will go for the said instrument; and, till my return, you may balance this matter in your own discretion. [Exit.

Lady W. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel! Must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, Madam, that you should smart for your daughter's wantonness.

Lady W. 'Twas against my consent that she married this barbarian; but she would have him, tho' her year was
not

not out—— Ah, her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers; she is matched now with a witness—— I—— shall be mad; dear friend, is there no comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate?—— Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Enter Millamant and Sir Wilfull.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Lady W. Out, caterpillar, call not me aunt? I know you not.

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say——'Sheart, and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no offence, aunt——and if I did, I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke any thing I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends, she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

Lady W. How's this, dear niece? Have I any comfort? Can this be true?

Mill. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, Madam, and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you are misinformed; I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood; and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your Ladyship's presence——He is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

Lady W. Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience; but I cannot admit that traitor——I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a Gorgon; if I see him, I fear I shall turn to stone, petrify incessantly.

Mill. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

Lady

Lady W. Are you sure it will be the last time?—If I were sure of that—shall I never see him again?

Milla. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman; aunt, let him come in; why we are sworn brothers and fellow travellers.—We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I—He is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over-seas once already; and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in—an I set on't once, he shall come in; and see who'll hinder him.

[Goes to the door and bends.

Mrs. Mar. This is precious fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady W. Oh, dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs. Mar. Not far, Madam; I'll return immediately.

[Exit Mrs. Mar.

Sir Wil. Look up, man, I'll stand by you; 'sbud an she do frown, she can't kill you;—besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own? 'Sheart, an she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mira. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady; with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy—' Ah, Madam, there was a time—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held of fighting at your feet; nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain—I come not to plead for favour; nay, not for pardon; I am suppliant only for pity'—I am going where I never shall behold you more—

Sir Wil. How, fellow-traveller?—You shall go by yourself then.

Mira. Let me be pitied first, and afterwards forgotten—I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r Lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt; why you must an you are a Christian.

Mira. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear; that to
your

your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet ; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir Wil. An he does not move me, would I may never be of the Quorum——An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again,——I would I might never take shipping——Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that, my contract went no farther than a little mouth-glue, and that's hardly dry :——one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis dissolved.

Lady. Well, nephew, upon your account——Ah, he has a false insinuating tongue——Well, Sir, I will stifle my just resentment at my nephew's request——I will endeavour what I can to forget——but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mrs. It is in writing, and with papers of concern ; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

L. W. Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue ; when I did not see him, I could have bribed a villain to his assassination ; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smothered in my breast.

[*Aside.*

Enter Mr. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood.

Fain. Your date of deliberation, Madam, is expired. Here is the instrument ; are you prepared to sign ?

Lady W. If I were prepared, I am not empowered. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having matched herself by my directions to Sir Wilfull.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me——though 'tis imposed upon you, Madam.

Milla. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mira. And, Sir, I have resigned my pretensions.

Sir Wil. And, Sir, I assert my right ; and will maintain it in defiance of you, Sir, and of your instrument. 'Sheart an you talk of an instrument, Sir, I have an old fox by my thigh shall hack your instrument of ram vellum to shreds, Sir. It shall not be sufficient for a mittimus, or a taylor's measure ; therefore withdraw your instrument, or by'r Lady I shall draw mine.

Lady

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

57

Lady W. Hold, nephew, hold.

Milla. Good Sir Wilfull, respite your valour.

Fain. Indeed! Are you provided of your guard, with your single beef-eater there. But I'm prepared for you; and insist upon the first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use; as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant—I suppose, Madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right. — You may draw your fox if you please, Sir, and make a bear-garden flourish somewhere else: for here it will not avail. This, my lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turned a-drift, like a leaky hulk, to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree.

Lady W. 'Is there no means, no remedy to stop my ruin?' Ungrateful wretch! dost thou not owe thy being; thy subsistence, to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mira. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—'I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me;' or else perhaps I could advise—

Lady W. Oh, what? what? To save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to any thing to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

Mira. Ay, Madam: but that's too late, my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her, who only could have made me a compensation for all my services:— But be it as it may, I am resolved I'll serve you; you shall not be wronged in this savage manner.

Lady W. How! Dear Mr. Mirabell? Can you be so generous at last! But it is not possible. Harkee; I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

Mira. Will you? I take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady W. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mira.

Mira. Foible is one, and a penitent.

Enter Mrs. Fainall, Foible, and Mincing.

Mrs. Mar. Oh, my shame! These corrupt things are brought hither to expose me. [To Fain.]

[Mira. and Lady go to Mrs. Fain and Foib.]

Fain. If it must all come out, why let them know it; 'tis but the Way of the World. That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one tittle of my terms; no, I will insist the more.

Foib. Yes indeed, Madam, I'll take my bible oath of it.

Min. And so will I, Mem.

Lady W. Oh, Marwood, Marwood, art thou false? My friend deceive me! Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mrs. Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice, to give credit against your friend to the aspersions of two such mercenary trulls?

Minc. Mercenary, Mem! I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secrecy upon Mes-salina's poems.—Mercenary! No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant thing—Well, what are you the better for this? Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient; I'll be put off no longer—You, thing, that was a wife, shall smart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy shame: your body shall be naked as your reputation.

Mrs. Fain. I despise you, and defy your malice—You have aspersed me wrongfully—I have proved your falsehood—Go, you and your treacherous—I will not name it, but starve together—Perish.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear. Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady W. Ah, Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

Mira. O, in good time—your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, Madam.

Enter Waitwell, with a box of writings.

L. W. O, Sir Rowland—Well, rascal.

Wait. What your ladyship pleases—I have brought the black box at last, Madam.

Mira. Give it me. ‘Madam, you remember your promise.

‘*Lady W.* Ay, dear Sir.’

Mira. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, Sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

Fain. Sdeath, what’s this to me? I’ll not wait your private concerns.

Enter Petulant and Witwoud.

Pet. How now? What’s the matter? Whose hand’s out?

Wit. Hey-day! what are you all got together, like players at the end of the last act?

Mira. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay, I do, my hand I remember.—Petulant set his mark.

Mira. You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall appear—you do not remember, gentlemen, any thing of what the parchment contained——

[*Undoing the box.*

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I. I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you shall know—‘Madam, your promise.

‘*Lady W.* Ay, ay, Sir, upon my honour.’

Mira. Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know, that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune——

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, Sir. I say that this lady, while a widow, having, it seems, received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, ‘which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you, she could never have suspected,’ she did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends, and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same, as her act and deed, to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read, if you

H

please

Please—[*Holding out the parchment*] though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir. What's here? Damnation! [*Reads.*] "A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell." Confusion!

Mira. Even, so, Sir, 'tis the Way of the World, Sir; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be reveng'd—
[*Offers to run at Mrs. Fain.*]

Sir Wil. Hold, Sir! now you may make your bear-garden flourish somewhere else, Sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, Sir, be sure you shall——Let me pass, oaf. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment: you had better give it vent.

Mrs. Mar. Yes, it shall have vent——and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt. [*Exit Mrs. Mar.*]

Lady W. O daughter, daughter, 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

Lady W. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise,—and I must perform mine.—First, I pardon, for your sake, Sir Rowland there, and Foible—The next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that——

Mira. For that, Madam, give yourself no trouble,—let me have your consent—Sir Wilfull is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action, for our service; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't, I must do't. And if these two gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think they may be spared.

Pet. For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or not.

Wit.

Wit. I gad, I understand nothing of the matter—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

Lady W. Well, Sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Milla. Why does not the man take me? Would you have me give myself to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again; [*Kisses her hand.*] I would have you as often as possibly I can. Well heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, you'll have time enough to toy after you're marry'd; 'or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the mean time; that we who are not lovers may have some other employment besides looking on.

Mira. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull. What shall we do for music?

Foib. O, Sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment, are yet within call. [*A dance.*]

Lady W. As I am a person I can hold out no longer—I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fear upon me yet, that my son Fainall, will pursue some desperate couric.

Mira. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge, his circumstances are such, he must of force comply; 'for my part I will contribute all that in me lies, to a re-union.' In the mean time, Madam, [*To Mrs. Fain.*] let me, before these witnesses, restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well managed, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed;

Lest mutual falshood stain the bridal-bed:

For each deceiver to his cost may find,

That marriage-frauds, too oft are paid in kind.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.

E P I L O G U E.

AFTER our Epilogue this croud dismisses,
 I'm thinking how this play'll be pull'd to pieces.
 But pray consider, e're you doom it fall,
 How hard a thing 'twould be, to please you all.
 There are some critics so with spleen diseas'd,
 They scarcely come, inclining to be pleas'd:
 And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
 Who pleases any one against his will.
 Then all bad poets, we are sure are foes,
 And how their number's swell'd, the town well knows;
 In shoals, I've mark'd 'em, judging in the pit;
 Tho' they're on no pretence for judgment fit,
 But that they have been damn'd for want of wit.
 Since when, they, by their own offences taught,
 Set up for spies on plays, and finding fault.
 Others there are, whose malice we'd prevent;
 Such, who watch plays, with scurrilous intent
 To mark out who by characters are meant:
 And tho' no perfect likeness they can trace;
 Yet each pretends to know the copy'd face.
 These, with false glosses, feed their own ill-nature,
 And turn to libel, what was meant a satire.
 May such malicious fops this fortune find,
 To think themselves alone the fools design'd:
 If any are so arrogantly vain,
 To think they singly can support a scene,
 And furnish fool-enough to entertain.
 For well the learn'd and the judicious know,
 That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low,
 As any one abased sap to show.
 For, as when painters form a matchless face,
 They from each fair one, catch some different grace;
 And shining features in one portrait blend,
 To which no single beauty must pretend:
 So poets oft, do in one piece expose,
 Whole belles assemblées of coquets and beaux.





AMPHITRYON
or
THE TWO SOSIA'S.

Act V.

Scene 7.



J. Robert del.

Published for the Author by Thomas, April 15. 1777.

B. Reading Sculpsit

M. QUICK, in the Character of JUDGE GRIPUS:
"Tis my proper Chattel, and, I'll have it."

BELL'S EDITION.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,

MDCCLXXVII.

AMPHITRYON
OR
THE TWO SOSIA'S.

Act V.

Scene 1.

Robert del.

Engraved for the Theatre-François, April 1777.

B. Goussier del.

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"Tis my proper Chattel, and, I'll have it."

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AMPHITRYON:

OR, THE

TWO SOCIAS.

A COMEDY,

As altered from DRYDEN by Dr. HAWKESWORTH.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE

VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

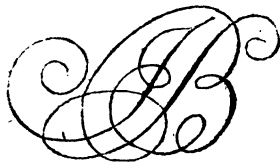
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,

MDCCLXXVII.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

On comparing this play, as performed at the Theatres, with the original, it was found impracticable to restore it to its primitive state, without throwing the whole into confusion; the Editor, therefore, hopes the reasons assigned in the Preface for the alterations and additions, will render it more acceptable to the reader than the original, and exculpate him, for deviating from his general rule of *giving the author entire.*

P R E F A C E.

THE abilities of Dryden as a writer, are so generally and so justly acknowledged to be of the first class, that it would be something worse than impropriety, to alter any of his productions without assigning the reason. For the alteration of his *Amphitryon*, indeed, the reason is evident; for it is so tainted with the profaneness and immodesty of the time in which he wrote, that the present time, however selfish and corrupt, has too much regard to external decorum, to permit the representation of it upon the stage, without drawing a veil, at least, over some part of its deformity: the principal part of the alterations, therefore, are made with a moral view; though some inaccuracies, which were remarked on the examination which these alterations made necessary, are also removed, of which the following are the chief.

In the scene between *Sofia* and *Mercury*, in the Second Act, *Amphitryon* is supposed to have sent a buckle of diamonds by *Sofia*, as a present to *Alcmena*; for *Sofia* first asks *Mercury* if *Amphitryon* did send a certain servant with a present to his wife; and soon after asks him; "what that present was;" which, by *Mercury's* answer, appears to be the diamond buckle: yet in the scene between *Amphitryon* and *Alcmena*, in the Third Act, when *Alcmena* asks him, as a proof of his having been with her before, from whose hands she had the jewel, he cries out, "This is amazing; have I already given you those diamonds? the present I reserved——" And instead of supposing that *Sofia* had delivered them as part of his errand, which he pretended he could not execute, he appeals to him for their being in safe custody, reserved to be presented by himself. This is an inconsistency peculiar to Dryden, for neither *Plautus* nor *Moliere* anywhere mention the present to have been sent by *Sofia*.

There is another inaccuracy of the same kind, which occurs both in Plautus and Moliere. It appears in the Second Act, that one part of Sofia's errand was to give Alcmena a particular account of the battle; and Sofia's account of his being prevented, is so extravagant and absurd, that Amphitryon cannot believe it: yet, when Alcmena, in the Third Act, asks Amphitryon how she came to know *what he had sent Sofia to tell her*, Amphitryon, in astonishment, seems to admit that she could know these particulars *only from himself*, and does not consider her question as a proof that Sofia had indeed delivered his message, though for some reasons he had pretended the contrary, and forged an incredible story to account for his neglect. As it would have been much more natural for Amphitryon to have supposed that Sofia had told him a lie, than that Alcmena had, by a miracle, learned what only he and Sofia could tell her, without seeing either of them; this inaccuracy is removed, by introducing such a supposition, and making the dialogue correspond with it.

In the Second Act, Jupiter, in the character of Amphitryon, leaves Alcmena with much reluctance, pretending haste to return to the camp, and great solicitude to keep his visit to her a secret from the Thebans: yet when he appears again in the Third Act, which he knew would be taken for the third appearance of Amphitryon, he does not account for his supposed second appearance at the return of the real Amphitryon, just after his departure, which seems to be absolutely necessary to maintain his borrowed character consistently; and without dropping the least hint of his being no longer solicitous to conceal his excursion from the camp, he sends Sofia to invite several of the citizens to dinner.

Many other inaccuracies less considerable, and less apparent, have been removed, which it is not necessary to point out: whoever shall think it worth while diligently to compare the play as it stood, with the altered copy, can scarce fail to see the reason of the alterations as they occur.

It must be confessed, that there are still many things in Amphitryon, which, though I did not obliterate, I would not have written; but I think none of these are

ex-

exceptionable in a moral view. There are many passages in which lord Amphitryon and lady Alcmena are treated by their servants with a familiarity, which is not now allowed on the greater stage of the living world; and, indeed, from this fault, I scarce know any comedy that is perfectly free: however, some of the grosser freedoms that were taken by Phædra with the character of Judge Gripus, are rejected; and this was the more necessary, as Gripus was Alcmena's uncle; and, therefore, in her presence, could not, without the utmost impropriety, be enquired after of Amphitryon himself, as a wretch who had grown old in the abuse of his office as a magistrate, by selling justice, and swelling his purse with bribes.

If, after all, it be asked, why this play was altered at all, I answer, because it might otherwise have been revived, either by other managers, or at another house, without being altered, otherwise than by being maimed: some parts, indeed would have been left out; but as nothing would have been substituted in the stead, it would have become imperfect, in proportion as it became less vicious; and would still have been so vicious in the very constituent parts, as to fully, and, perhaps, corrupt almost every mind, before which it had been represented. But though I should have been sorry to see the joint work of Plautus, Moliere, and Dryden, so mutilated, as to lose that proportion of parts by which alone those parts can constitute a whole; yet my principal view was effectually to prevent the exhibition of it in a condition, in which it could not be safely seen: and this, I hope, will be admitted as a sufficient apology, for my having thus employed some hours of that time which shall return no more, by those who have little regard for Amphitryon as a piece of ancient humour, retouched and heightened by two of the most eminent masters that modern times have produced.





The Original PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr. DRYDEN.

THE lab'ring bee, when his sharp sting is gone,
 Forgets his golden work, and turns a drone :
 Such is a satyr, when you take away
 That rage, in which his noble vigour lay.
 What gain you, by not suffering him to teize ye ?
 He neither can offend you, now, nor please ye.
 The honey-bag and venom lay so near,
 That both together you resolv'd to tear ;
 And lost your pleasure, to secure your fear.
 How can he show his manhood, if you bind him
 To box, like boys, with one hand ty'd behind him ?
 This is plain levelling of wit ; in which
 The poor has all th' advantage, not the rich.
 The blockhead stands excus'd for wanting sense ;
 And wits turn blockheads in their own defence.
 Yet, though the stage's traffic is undone,
 Still Julian's interloping trade goes on :
 Though satyr on the theatre you smother,
 Yet in lampoons, you libel one another.
 The first produces still a second jig ;
 You whip them out, like school-boys, till they gig :
 And, with the same success, we readers guess ;
 For, every one still dwindles to a less.
 And much good malice, is so meanly drest,
 That we wou'd laugh, but cannot find the jest.
 If no advice your rhiming rage can stay,
 Let not the ladies suffer in the fray.
 Their tender sex is privileg'd from war ;
 'Tis not like knights, to draw upon the fair.

What

*What fame expect you from so mean a prize?
 We wear no murd'ring weapons, but our eyes.
 Our sex, you know, was after yours design'd;
 The last perfection of the Maker's mind:
 Heav'n drew out all the gold for us, and left your dross
 behind.* }

*Beauty, for valour's best reward, be chuse;
 Peace, after war; and after toil, repose.
 Hence, ye prophane, excluded from our fights,
 And charm'd by day, with honour's vain delights,
 Go, make your best of solitary nights.
 Recant betimes, 'tis prudence to submit:
 Our sex is still your overmatch in wit:
 We never fail, with new successful arts,
 To make fine fools of you, and all your parts.* }



P R O L O G U E.

THIS night let busy man to pleasure spare :
 Far hence be siarebing thought, and pining care ;
 Far hence whate'er can agonize the soul,
 Grief, terror, rage, the dagger, and the bowl !
 The comic muse, a gay propitious pow'r,
 To dimpled laughter gives this mirthful hour.
 The scenes which Plautus drew, to-night we shew
 Touch'd by Moliere, by Dryden taught to glow.
 Dryden !—in evil days his genius rose,
 When wit and decency were constant foes :
 Wit then desil'd in manners and in mind,
 When'er he sought to please, disgrac'd mankind.
 Freed from his faults, we bring him to the fair ;
 And urge once more his claim to beauty's care.
 That thus we court your praise, is praise bestow'd ;
 Since all our virtue from your virtue flow'd.
 But there are some—no matter where they sit—
 Who smack their lips and hope the luscious bit.
 These claim regard, deny it they that can—
 “ The prince of darkness is a gentleman ! ”
 Yet why apologize, though these complain ;
 They're free to all the rest of Drury-Lane.
 To these bright rows we boast a kind intent ;
 We sought their plaudit, and their pleasure meant.
 Yet not on what we give, our fame must rise ;
 In what we take away, our merit lies.
 On no new force bestow'd we found our claim ;
 To make wit honest, was our only aim :
 If we succeed, some praise we boldly ask—
 To make wit honest is no easy task.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N,

Drury-Lane. Covent-Garden.

<i>Jupiter,</i>	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Mercury,</i>	Mr. Jefferson.	Mr. Lee Lewes.
<i>Phæbus,</i>	Mr. Hurst.	Mr. Booth.
<i>Amphitryon,</i>	Mr. Aickin.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Sofia,</i>	Mr. King.	Mr. Woodward.
<i>Grius,</i>	Mr. Parsons.	Mr. Quick.
<i>Polidas,</i>	Mr. Fawcett.	
<i>Tranio,</i>	Mr. Chaplin.	

W O M E N.

<i>Alcmena,</i>	Miss Younge.	Mrs. Hartley.
<i>Phædra,</i>	Miss Pope.	Mrs. Mattocks.
<i>Bronia,</i>	Mrs. Bradshaw.	Mrs. Pitt.
<i>Night,</i>	Miss Platt.	Mrs. Pouffin.

SCENE, *THEBES.*

AMPHITRYON.

AMPHITRYON.

* * * The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

Mercury and Phœbus discovered.

PHŒBUS.

KNOW you the reason of this present summons ?
 'Tis neither council-day, nor is this heaven.
 What business has our Jupiter on earth ?
 Why more at Thebes than any other place ?
 And why are we, of all the deities,
 Selected out to meet him in consult ?
 They call me God of Wisdom ; but the hind,
 That, whistling, turns the furrow to my beams,
 Knows full as much as I.

Merc. I have discharged my duty, which was to summon you, Phœbus. We shall know more anon, when the thunderer comes down. 'Tis our part to obey our father ; and here he is.

Jupiter descends.

Jup. No thoughts, not ev'n of gods, are hid from Jove.
 Your doubts are all before me ; but my will,
 In awful darkness wrapt, no eye can reach,
 Till I withdraw the veil. Yet thus far know,
 That, for the good of human kind, this night
 I shall beget a future Hercules,
 Who shall redress the wrongs of injur'd mortals,
 Shall conquer monsters, and reform the world.

Phœb. Some mortal, we presume, of Cadmus' blood—
 Some Theban beauty——

Jup. Yes, the fair Alcmena.
 You two must be subservient to my purpose.

Amphitryon, the brave Theban general,
Has overcome his country's foes in fight,
And in a single duel slain their king.
His conquering troops are eager on their march,
Returning home; while their young general,
More eager to review his beauteous wife,
Posts on before, wing'd with impetuous love,
And, by to-morrow's dawn, will reach this town.

Phœb. Then how are we to be employ'd this evening?
Time's precious, and these summer nights are short;
~~I must be early up to light the world.~~

Jup. You shall not rise; there shall be no to-morrow.

Merc. Then the world's to be at an end, I find.

Phœb. Or else a gap in nature, of a day.

Jup. The night, if not restrain'd, too soon would pass;
Too soon the dawn would bring Amphitryon back,
Whose place I mean to hold. And sure a day,
One day, will be well lost to busy man.
Night shall continue sleep, and care suspend:
So, many men shall live, and live in peace,
Whom sunshine had betray'd to envious fight,
And fight to sudden rage, and rage to death.

Phœb. I shall be curs'd by all the lab'ring trades,
That early rise. But you must be obey'd.

Jup. No matter for the cheating part of man;
They have a day's sin less to answer for.

Phœb. When would you have me wake?

Jup. Your brother Mercury shall bring you word.

[*Exit Phœbus in his chariot.*]

Now, Hermes, I must take Amphitryon's form;
Thou must be Sofia, this Amphitryon's slave,
Who, all this night, is travelling to Thebes,
To tell Alcmena of her lord's approach,
And bring her joyful news of victory.

Merc. But why must I be Sofia?

Jup. Dull god of wit, thou statue of thyself!
Thou must be Sofia, to keep out Sofia,
Whose entrance well might raise unruly noise,
And so distract Alcmena's tender soul,
She would not meet, with equal warmth, my love.

Merc. Let me alone; I'll cudgel him away;
But I abhor so villainous a shape.

Jup.

Jup. Take it ; I charge thee, on thy duty, take it ;
Nor dare to lay it down, till I command thee.

Night appears above in her chariot.

Look up ; the Night is in her silent chariot,
And rolling just o'er Thebes. Bid her drive slowly,
Or make a double turn about the world ;

While I drop Jove, and take Amphitryon's dress,
To be the greater, while I seem the less. [*Exit Jup.*

Merc. [*To Night.*] Madam Night, a good even to you.
Fair and softly, I beseech you, Madam : I have a word
or two to you, from no less a god than Jupiter..

Night. Oh, my industrious and rhetorical friend, is it
you ? What makes you here upon earth at this unseasonable hour ?

Merc. Why, I'll tell you presently ; but first let me sit
down ; for I'm confoundedly tired.

Night. Fie, Mercury ! sure your tongue runs before
your wit, now. Does it become a god, think you, to
say that he is tired ?

Merc. Why, do you think the Gods are made of iron ?

Night. No ; but you should always keep up the decorum
of divinity in your conversation, and leave to mankind
the use of such vulgar words as derogate from the
dignity of immortality.

Merc. Ay, 'tis fine talking, faith, in that easy chariot
of yours : you have a brace of fine geldings before you,
and have nothing to do, but to touch the reins with your
finger or thumb, throw yourself back in your seat, and enjoy
your ride wherever you please : but 'tis not so with
me ; I, who am the messenger of the gods, and traverse
more ground, both in heaven and earth, than all of them
put together, am, thanks to Fate, the only one that is
not furnished with a vehicle.

Night. But if Fate has denied you a vehicle, she has
bestowed wings upon your feet.

Merc. Yes, I thank her, that I might make the more
haste ; but does making more haste, keep me from being
tired, d'ye think ?

Night. Well, but to the business. What have you to
say to me ?

Merc. Why, as I told you, I have a message from Jupiter :
it is his will and pleasure, that you muffle up this
part

part of the world in your dark mantle, somewhat longer than usual at this time of the year.

Night. Why, what is to be done now ?

Merc. Done ! why, he is this night to be the progenitor of a demigod, who shall destroy monsters, humble tyrants, and redress the injured ; men are to become happy by his labours, and heroic by his example.

Night. Jupiter is very gracious indeed to mankind ; but I am not much obliged to him for the honourable employment he has been pleased to assign me in this business.

Merc. Not obliged to him, Madam ! why so ? You was always a friend to mankind ; and he might reasonably think you would take pleasure in deserving their homage upon so important an occasion.

Night. Pleasure ! What, in taking upon me the most odious character ; a character that——

Merc. Come, come, Madam ; that is good of which good comes : this is a safe principle for us deities, whatever it is for mortals, who can no more see the consequences of their own actions, than what is doing behind your curtain.

Night. Sir, I beg pardon—I acknowledge, Sir, that you are much better acquainted with these affairs than I am ; and therefore will e'en accept of my employment, relying wholly upon your judgment.

Merc. Not so fast, good Madam Night ; none of your innuendo's, if you please : you are reported not to be so shy as you pretend ; and I know that you are the trusty confidant of many a private treaty, and have as little to boast of, in some particulars, as I.

Night. Well, well, do not let us expose ourselves to the malicious laughter of mankind, by our quarrels.

Merc. About your business, then ; put a spoke into your chariot-wheels, and order the seven stars to halt, while I put myself into the habit of a serving-man, and dress up a false Sofia, to wait upon a false Amphitryon. Good night, Night.

Night. My service to Jupiter. Farewel, Mercury.

[*Night goes backward.* *Exit Merc.*

SCENE,

S C E N E, Amphitryon's Palace.

Enter Alcmena.

Alc. Why was I marry'd to the man I love ?
For, had he been indifferent to my choice ;
Or had been hated, absence had been pleasure ;
But now I fear for my Amphitryon's life :
At home, in private, and secure from war,
I am amidst an host of armed foes ;
Sustaining all his cares, pierc'd with his wounds ;
And, if he falls, (which, Oh, ye gods, avert !)
Am in Amphitryon slain. Would I were there,
And he were here ! so might we change our fates,
That he might grieve for me, and I might die for him !

Enter Phædra, running.

Phæd. Good news, good news, Madam !—Oh, such
admirable news, that, if I kept it in a moment, I should
burst with it !

Alc. Is it from the army ?

Phæd. No matter.

Alc. From Amphitryon ?

Phæd. No matter, neither.

Alc. Answer me, I charge thee, if thy good news be
any thing relating to my Lord ; if it be, assure thyself
of a reward.

Phæd. Ay, Madam, now you say something to the mat-
ter. You know the business of a poor waiting-woman
here upon earth, is to be scraping up something against a
rainy day, called the day of marriage ; every one in our
own vocation. But what matter is it to me if my Lord
has routed the enemy, if I get nothing of their spoils ?

Alc. Say, is my Lord victorious ?

Phæd. Why, he is victorious. Indeed, I prayed de-
voutly to Jupiter for a victory ; by the same token, that
you should give me ten pieces of gold, if I brought you
news of it.

Alc. They are thine ; supposing he be safe too.

Phæd. Nay, that's a new bargain ; for I vowed to
Jupiter, that then you should give me ten pieces more.
But I do undertake for my Lord's safety, if you will
please to discharge Jupiter of the debt, and take it upon
you to pay.

Alc. When he returns in safety, Jupiter and I will pay your vow.

Phad. And I am sure I artickled with Jupiter, that if I brought you news, that my Lord was upon return, you should grant me one small favour more, that will cost you nothing.

Alc. Make haste, thou torturer; is my Amphitryon upon return?

Phad. Promise me that I shall be your bedfellow to-night, as I have been ever since my Lord's absence — unless I shall be pleased to release you of your word.

Alc. That's a small request; 'tis granted.

Phad. But, swear, by Jupiter.

Alc. I swear, by Jupiter.

Phad. Then, I believe he is victorious; and I know he is safe; for I looked through the key-hole, and saw him knocking at the gate.

Alc. And wouldst thou not open to him? Oh, thou traitress!

Phad. No, I was a little wiser. I left Sofia's wife to let him in; for I was resolved to bring the news, and make my pennyworths out of him, as time shall show.

Enter Jupiter in the shape of Amphitryon, with Sofia's wife, Bromia. He kisses and embraces Alcmena.

Jup. Oh, let me live for ever on those lips!

The nectar of the gods to these is tasteless.

I swear, that were I Jupiter, this night

I would renounce my Heav'n to be Amphitryon.

Alc. Then, not to swear beneath Amphitryon's oath, (Forgive me, Juno, if I am profane)

I swear, I would be what I am this night,

And be Alcmena, rather than be Juno.

Brom. Good, my Lord, what's become of my poor bedfellow, your man, Sofia? What, I say, tho' I am a poor woman, I have a husband as well as my Lady.

Phad. And what have you done with your old friend, and my old sweetheart, Judge Gripus? If he be rich, I'll make him welcome, like an honourable magistrate; but if not —

Alc. My Lord, you tell me nothing of the battle. Is Thebes victorious? Are our foes destroy'd?

For,

For, now I find you safe, I should be glad
To hear you were in danger.

Brom. [*Pulling him on one side.*] I asked the first question; answer me, my Lord.

Phæd. [*Pulling him on t'other side.*] Peace! mine's a lover, and yours but a husband; and my Judge is my Lord too; the title shall take place, and I will be answered.

Jup. Sofia is safe—Gripus is rich—both coming—I rode before them with a lover's haste.——

Alc. Then I, it seems, am last to be regarded?

Jup. Not so, my love, but these obstreperous tongues
Have snatch'd their answers first—they will be heard.

Let us retire where none shall interrupt us;

I'll tell thee there the battle and success.

But I shall oft begin, and then break off;

For love will often interrupt my tale,

And make so sweet confusion in our talk,

That thou shalt ask, and I shall answer things,

That are not of a piece, but patch'd with kisses;

And nonsense shall be eloquent in love.

Alc. I am the fool of love, and find within me:

The fondness of a bride, without the fear.

My whole desires and wishes are in you.

Great Juno! thou, whose holy care presides

O'er wedded love, thy choicest blessings pour

On this auspicious night.

Jup. Juno may grudge; for she may fear a rival!

In those bright eyes: but Jupiter will grant,

And doubly bless this night.

Phæd. [*Aside.*] But Jupiter should ask my leave first.

Alc. Bromia, prepare the chamber;

The tedious journey has dispos'd my Lord

To seek his needful rest.

[*Exit Bromia.*]

Phæd. 'Tis very true, Madam; the poor gentleman must needs be weary: and, therefore, 'twas not ill contrived, that he must lie alone to-night.

Alc. [*To Jup.*] I must confess, I made a kind of promise.

Phæd. [*Almost crying.*] A kind of promise, do you call it? I see you would fain be coming off. I am sure you swore to me, by Jupiter, that I should be your bedfellow; and I'll accuse you to him too, the first prayers I make; and I'll pray on purpose too, that I will.

Jup. Oh, the malicious hilding!

Alc. I did swear, indeed, my Lord.

Jup. Forswear thyself; for Jupiter but laughs
At lovers perjuries.

Phad. The more shame for him, if he does.

Jup. Alcmena, come——

Alc. [*Sighing.*] She has my oath;
And sure she may release it, if she pleases——

Phad. Why, truly, Madam, I am not cruel, in my nature, to poor distressed lovers; for it may be my own case another day: and therefore, if my Lord pleases to consider me——

Jup. Any thing, any thing! but name thy wish, and have it——

Phad. Ay, now you say, any thing, any thing! but you would tell me another story to-morrow morning. Look you, my Lord, here's a hand open to receive: you know the meaning of it.

Jup. Thou shalt have all the treasury of heaven.

Phad. Yes, when you are Jupiter to dispose of it. You have got some part of the enemies spoil, I warrant you—I see a little trifling diamond upon your finger; and I am proud enough to think it would become mine too.

Jup. Here, take it.

[*Taking a ring off his finger, and giving it.*]

This is a very woman:

Her sex is avarice, and she, in one,
Is all her sex.

Phad. Ay, ay, 'tis no matter what you say of us. Go, get you together, you naughty couple——To-morrow morning I shall have another fee for parting you.

[*Phædra goes out before Alcmena with a light.*]

Jup. Now, for one night, I leave the world to Fate;
Love is alone my great affair of state.

This night let all my altars smoke in vain,
And man, unheeded, praise me, or complain.
Yet if in some short intervals of rest,
By some fond youth, an am'rous vow's address,
His pray'r is in an happy hour prefer'd;
And when Jove loves, a lover shall be heard.

[*Exit.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

A Night-Scene of a Palace.

Sofia with a dark-lantern: Mercury, in Sofia's shape, with a dark-lantern also.

SOSIA.

WAS not the devil in my master, to send me out this dreadful dark night, to bring the news of his victory to my Lady? And was not I possessed with ten devils, for going on his errand, without a convoy for the safeguard of my person? Lord how am I melted into sweat with fear! I am diminished of my natural weight above two stone. I shall not bring half myself home again, to my poor wife and family. Well, the greatest plague of a serving-man is to be hired to some great lord. They care not what drudgery they put upon us, while they lie lolling at their ease a-bed, and stretch their lazy limbs in expectation of the whore which we are fetching for them. The better sort of them will say, Upon my honour, at every word: yet ask them for our wages, and they plead the privilege of their honour, and will not pay us; nor let us take our privilege of the law upon them. These are a very hopeful sort of patriots, to stand up as they do, for liberty and property of the subject. There's conscience for you!

Merc. [Aside.] This fellow has something of the republican spirit in him.

Sof. [Looking about him.] Stay; this, methinks, should be our house. And I should thank the gods now, for bringing me safe home. But I think I had as good let my devotions alone, till I have got the reward for my good news, and then thank them once for all; for, if I praise them before I am safe within doors, some damn'd mastiff dog may come out and worry me; and then my thanks are thrown away upon them.

Merc. [Aside.] Thou art a wicked rogue, and wilt have thy bargain before-hand: therefore thou get'st not into the house this night; and thank me accordingly as I use thee.

Sof. Now I am to give my Lady an account of my Lord's victory; 'tis good to exercise my parts beforehand, and file my tongue into eloquent expressions, to tickle her ladyship's imagination.

Merc.

Merc. [*Aside.*] Good ! and here's the god of eloquence to judge of thy oration.

Sof. [*Setting down his lanthorn.*] This lanthorn, for once, shall be my Lady ; because she is the lamp of all beauty and perfection.

Merc. Excellent !

Sof. Then thus I make my addressee to her. [*Bows.*] Madam, my Lord has chosen me out, as the most faithful, though the most unworthy of his followers, to bring your ladyship this following account of our glorious expedition. — Then she — Oh, my poor Sofia, [*In a brisk tone.*] how am I overjoyed to see thee ! — She can say no less — Madam, you do me too much honour, and the world will envy me this glory — Well answered on my side — And how does my Lord Amphitryon ? — Madam, he always does like a man of courage, when he is called by honour — There, I think, I nick'd it — But, when will he return ? — As soon as possibly he can ; but not so soon as his impatient heart could wish him with your ladyship.

Merc. [*Aside.*] When Thebes is an university, thou deservest to be their orator.

Sof. But what does he do, and what does he say ? Pr'ythee, tell me something more of him — He always says less than he does, Madam ; and his enemies have found it to their cost — Where the devil did I learn these elegancies and gallantries ?

Merc. So ; he has all the natural endowments of a fop, and only wants the education.

Sof. [*Staring up to the sky.*] What, is the devil in the night ? She's as long as two nights. The seven stars are just where they were seven hours ago. High day — high night, I mean, by my favour. What, has Phœbus been playing the good-fellow, and over-slept himself, that he forgets his duty to us mortals ?

Merc. How familiarly the rascal treats us gods ! but I shall make him alter his tone immediately.

[*Mercury comes nearer, and stands just before him.*]

Sof. [*Seeing him, and starting back. Aside.*] How now ! What, do my eyes dazzle, or is my dark lanthorn false to me ? Is not that a giant before our door, or a ghost of somebody slain in the late battle ? If he be, 'tis unconscionably done, to fright an honest man thus, who never drew

drew weapon wrathfully in all his life. Whatever wight he be, I am devilishly afraid, that's certain; but 'tis discretion to keep my own counsel. I'll sing, that I may seem valiant.

[Sofia sings; and as Mercury speaks, by little and little drops his voice.

Merc. What saucy companion is this, that deafens us with his hoarse voice? What midnight ballad-finger have we here? I shall teach the villain to leave off catterwawling.

Sof. I would I had courage for his sake; that I might teach him to call my singing catterwawling—An illiterate rogue; an enemy to the muses and to music.

Merc. There is an ill savour that offends my nostrils; and it wasteth this way.

Sof. He has smelt me out. My fear has betrayed me into this savour—I am a dead man—The bloody villain is at his fee, fa, fum, already.

Merc. Stand; who goes there?

Sof. A friend.

Merc. What friend?

Sof. Why, a friend to all the world that will give me leave to live peaceably.

Merc. I defy peace and all its works—My arms are out of exercise; they have mauled nobody these three days: I long for an honourable occasion to pound a man, and lay him asleep at the first buffet.

Sof. [*Aside.*] That would almost do me a kindness; for I have been kept waking, without tipping one wink of sleep, these three nights.

Merc. Of what quality are you, fellow?

Sof. Why, I am a man, fellow—Courage, Sofia!—

Merc. What kind of man?

Sof. Why, a two-legged man; what man should I be? [*Aside.*] I must bear up to him; he may prove as errant a milkop as myself.

Merc. Thou art a coward, I warrant thee; do I not hear thy teeth chatter in thy head?

Sof. Ay, ay, that's only a sign they would be snapping at thy nose—[*Aside.*] Bless me, what an arm and fist he has! with great thumb-toe, and golla and knuckle-bones of a very butcher.

Merc.

Merc. Sirrah, from whence come you, and whither go you? Answer me directly, upon pain of assassination.

Sof. I am coming from whence I came, and am going whither I go; that's directly home. Tho' this is somewhat an uncivil manner of proceeding, at the first sight of a man, let me tell you.

Merc. Then, to begin our better acquaintance, let me first make you a small present of this box o' th' ear——

[*Strikes him.*]

Sof. If I were as cholerick a fool as you are, now, here would be fine work betwixt us two; but I am a little better bred, than to disturb the sleeping neighbourhood; and so, good night, friend——

[*Going.*]

Merc. [*Stopping him.*] Hold, Sir; you and I must not part so easily. Once more, whither are you going?

Sof. Why, I am going as fast as I can, to get out of the reach of your clutches. Let me but only knock at that door there.

Merc. What business have you at that door, sirrah?

Sof. This is our house; and when I'm got in I'll tell you more.

Merc. Whose house is this, sauciness, that you are so familiar with, to call it ours?

Sof. 'Tis mine, in the first place; and next, my master's; for I lie in the garret, and he lies under me.

Merc. Have your master and you no names, sirrah?

Sof. His name is Amphitryon—Hear that, and tremble.

Merc. What, my lord general?

Sof. Oh! has his name mollified you? I have brought you down a peg lower already, friend.

Merc. And your name is——

Sof. Lord, friend, you are so very troublesome—What should my name be, but Sofia?

Merc. How, Sofia; say you; How long have you taken up that name, sirrah?

Sof. Here's a fine question! Why, I never took it up, friend; it was born with me.

Merc. What, was your name born Sofia? Take this remembrance for that lie.

[*Beats him.*]

Sof. Hold, friend; you are so very flippant with your hands, you won't hear reason. What offence has my name done you, that you should beat me for it? S. O. S. I. A. they

they are as civil, honest, harmless letters, as any are in the whole alphabet.

Merc. I have no quarrel to the name, but that 'tis e'en too good for you, and 'tis none of yours.

Sof. What, am not I Sofia, say you?

Merc. No.

Sof. I should think you are somewhat merrily disposed, if you had not beaten me in such sober sadness. You would persuade me out of my heathen name, would you?

Merc. Say you are Sofia again, at your peril, firrah.

Sof. I dare say nothing; but thought is free. But, whatever I am called, I am Amphitryon's man, and the first letter of my name is S too. You had best tell me that my master did not send me home to my lady, with news of his victory.

Merc. I say he did not.

Sof. Lord, lord, friend, one of us two is horribly given to lying!—but I do not say which of us, to avoid contention.

Merc. I say my name is Sofia, and yours is not.

Sof. I would you could make good your words; for then I should not be beaten, and you should.

Merc. I find you would be Sofia, if you durst—' but ' if I catch you thinking so——

' *Sof.* I hope I may think I was Sofia; and I can find ' no difference between my former self, and my present ' self; but that I was plain Sofia before, and now I am ' lac'd Sofia.'

Merc. Take this, for being so impudent to think so.

[Beats him.]

Sof. [Kneeling.] Truce a little, I beseech thee. I would be a stock or a stone, now, by my good will, and would not think at all, for self-preservation. But will you give me leave to argue the matter fairly with you, and promise me to depose that cudgel, if I can prove myself to be that man that I was before I was beaten.

' *Merc.* Well, proceed in safety. I promise you I will ' not beat you.

' *Sof.* In the first place, then, is not this town called ' Thebes?

' *Merc.* Undoubtedly.

' *Sof.* And is not this house Amphitryon's?

Merc. Who denies it ?

Sof. I thought you would have denied that too ; for all hang upon a string. Remember then, that these two preliminary articles are already granted. In the next place, did not the aforesaid Amphitryon beat the Teleboans, kill their king, Pterelas, and send a certain servant, meaning somebody, that for sake's-sake shall be nameless, with news of his victory, and of his resolution to return to-morrow ?

Merc. This is all true, to a very tittle : but who is that certain servant ? there's all the question.

Sof. Is it peace or war betwixt us ?

Merc. Peace.

Sof. I dare not wholly trust that abominable cudgel. But 'tis a certain friend of yours and mine, that had a certain name, before he was beaten out of it. But if you are a man that depend not altogether upon force and brutality, but somewhat also upon reason, now do you bring better proofs that you are that same certain man ; and in order to it, answer me to certain questions.

Merc. I say I am Sofia, Amphitryon's man. What reason have you to urge against it ?

Sof. What was your father's name ?

Merc. Davus ; who was an honest husbandman, whose sister's name was Harpage, that was married and died in a foreign country.]

Sof. So far you are right, I must confess ; and your wife's name is——

Merc. Bromia—a devilish shrew of her tongue, and a vixen of her hands, that leads me a miserable life——

Sof. By many a sorrowful token. This must be I.

Merc. I was once taken upon suspicion of burglary, and was whipped through Thebes, and branded for my pains.

Sof. Right me again. But if you are I, as I begin to suspect, that whipping and branding might have been passed over in silence, for both our credits.——And yet, now I think on't, if I am I, (as I am I) he cannot be I. All these circumstances he might have heard ; but I will now interrogate him upon some private passages. [*Aside.*] What was Amphitryon's share of the booty ?

Merc.

Merc. [A buckle of diamonds, consisting of five large stones, which was worn as an ornament by Pterelas.]

Sof. What does he intend to do with it?

Merc. To present it to his wife, Alcmena.

Sof. And where is it now?

Merc. In a case, sealed with my master's coat of arms.

Sof. This is prodigious, I confess!—but yet 'tis nothing; now I think on't; for some false brother may have revealed it to him. [*Aside.*]—But I have another question to ask you, of somewhat that passed only betwixt myself and me—If you are Sofia, what were you doing in the heat of battle?

Merc. What a wise man should, that has a respect for his own person. I ran into our tent, and hid myself amongst the baggage?

Sof. [*Aside.*] Such another cutting answer, and I must provide myself of another name. [*To him.*] And how did you pass your time in that same tent?—You need not answer to every circumstance so exactly now; you must lie a little, that I may think you the more me.

Merc. That cunning shall not serve your turn, to circumvent me out of my name. I am for plain naked truth—There stood a hogshhead of old wine, which my Lord reserved for his own drinking—

Sof. [*Aside.*] Oh, the devil! As sure as death, he must have hid himself in that hogshhead, or he could never have known that.

Merc. And by that hogshhead, upon the ground, there lay the kind inviter and provoker of good drinking—

Sof. Nay, now I have caught you—there was neither inviter nor provoker; for I was all alone.

Merc. A lusty gammon of—

Sof. Bacon!—That word has quite made an end of me—Let me see—This must be I, in spite of me—But let me view him nearer.

[*Walks about Mercury with his dark lanthorn.*]

Merc. What are you walking about me for, with your dark lanthorn?

Sof. No harm, friend; I am only surveying a parcel of earth here that I find we two are about to bargain for. [*Aside.*] He's damnable like me, that's certain.—*Imprimis*, there's the patch upon my nose, with a pox to him—

Item, A very foolish face, with a long chin at the end on't—*Item*, one pair of shambling legs, with two splay feet belonging to them. And—*summa totalis*, from head to foot, all my bodily apparel — [*To Merc.*] Well, you are Sofia; there's no denying it. But what am I, then? for my mind misgives me, I am somebody still, if I knew but who I were.

Merc. When I have a mind to be Sofia no more, then thou may'st be Sofia again.

Sof. I have but one request more to thee—that, tho' not as Sofia, yet as a stranger, I may go into that house, and carry a civil message to my Lady.

Merc. No, sirrah; not being Sofia, you have no message to deliver, nor lady in this house.

Sof. Thou canst not be so barbarous, to let me lie in the streets all night, after such a journey, and such a beating; and therefore I am resolved to knock at the door in my own defence.

Merc. If you come near the door, I recall my word, and break off the truce—and then expect——

[*Holds up his cudgel.*]

Sof. No, the devil take me, if I do expect—I have felt too well what sour fruit that crab-tree bears: I'll rather beat it back upon the hoof to my Lord Amphitryon, to see if he will acknowledge me for Sofia: if he does not, then I am no longer his slave; there's my freedom dearly purchased with a sore drubbing: if he does acknowledge me, then I am Sofia again; so far 'tis tolerably well: but then I shall have a second drubbing for an unfortunate ambassador as I am; and that's intolerable. [*Exit.*]

Merc. I have fobbed his excellency pretty well. Now let him return, and make the best of his credentials. But here comes Jupiter.

Enter Jupiter, leading Alcmena, followed by Phædra.

Pages with torches before them,

Jup. Those torches are offensive; stand aloof:

[*To the Pages.*]

For tho' they bless me with thy heav'nly sight, [*To her.*]
They may disclose the secret I would hide.

The Thebans must not know I have been here;
Detracting crouds would blame me, that I stole
These happy moments from my public charge,

To

To consecrate to thee ; and I could wish
That none were witness of the theft, but she
By whom it is approv'd —

Alc. So long an absence, and so short a stay !
What, but one night ! One night of joy and love,
Could only pay one night of cares and fears ;
And all the rest are an uncancell'd sum.

Jup. Alcmena, I must go.

Alc. Not yet, my Lord.

Jup. Indeed, I must.

Alc. Indeed, you shall not go.

Jup. Behold the ruddy streaks o'er yonder hill !
Those are the blushes of the breaking morn,
That kindle day-light to this nether world.

Alc. No matter for the day ; it was but made
To number out the hours of busy men.

Let them be busy still, and still be wretched ;

And take their fill of anxious drudging day :

But you and I will draw our curtains close,

Extinguish day-light, and shut out the sun.

Stay, then, my Lord—I'll bribe you with this kiss.

Merc. [*Aside.*] That's a plaguy little devil. What a
• roguish eye she has ! I begin to like her strangely.
• She's the perquisite of my place too ; for my Lady's
• waiting-woman is the proper fees of my Lord's chief
• gentleman.

Jup. A bribe, indeed, that soon will bring me back ;
Though now it is not possible to stay.

Alc. Not possible ! Alas, how short is life,

If we compute alone those happy hours

In which we wish to live ! ' Our seventy years

• Are fill'd with pains, diseases, wants and woes,

• And only dash'd with love ; a little love !

• Sprinkled by fits, and with a sparing hand.

• Count all our joys, from childhood ev'n to age,

• They would but make a day of ev'ry year.

• Oh, would the gods comprise the quintessence

• In seventy days, and take the rest away !'

Jup. By heav'n, thy ev'ry word and look, Alcmena,
Fans the fierce flame thy charms have kindled here.

My love, encreas'd by thine, as fire by fire,

Mounts with more ardour in a brighter blaze.

But yet one scruple pains me at my parting;
 I love so nicely, that I cannot bear
 To owe my pleasures to submissive duty:
 Tell me, and sooth my passion, that you give them
 All to the lover, and forget the husband.

Alc. And yet, my Lord, the husband's right alone
 Can justify the love that burns for you:
 Nor do I suffer ought that would suggest
 The scruple which your fond desire has rais'd.

Jup. Oh, that you lov'd like me! then you would
 A thousand thousand niceties in love. [sing
 The common love of sex to sex is brutal:
 But love refin'd will fancy to itself
 Millions of gentle cares, and sweet disquiets.
 The being happy is not half the joy;
 The manner of the happiness is all.

Alc. Confessing that you love and are belov'd,
 Rest happy in that thought, nor wish to lose
 The right that consecrates the lover's joy.

Jup. I am at once a lover and an husband;
 But as a lover only I am happy:
 A lover, jealous of a husband's right,
 By which he scorns to claim; whose tend'rest joy
 Must all be giv'n, not paid. Oh, my Alcmena,
 Indulge the lover's wishes, thus refin'd,
 Divide him from the husband, give to each
 What each requires, thy virtue to the husband,
 And on the lover lavish all thy love!

Alc. I comprehend not what you mean, my Lord:
 But only love me still, and love me thus,
 And think me such as best may please your thought.

Jup. There's mystery of love in all I say:
 But duty, cruel duty, tears me from thee.
 Howe'er, indulge at least this small request—
 When next you see your husband, dear Alcmena,
 Think of your lover then.

Alc. Oh, let me ne'er divide what Heav'n has join'd!
 Husband and lover both are dear to me.

Jup. Farewel—

Alc. Farewel—But will you soon return?

Jup. I will, believe me, with a lover's haste.

[*Exeunt Jup. and Alc. severally: Phæd. follows box.*
Merc.

Merc. Now I should follow him ; but Love has laid a time-twigg for me, and made a lame god of me. Yet why should I love this Phædra ? She's mercenary, and a jilt into the bargain. Three thousand years hence, there will be a whole nation of such women, in a certain country that will be called France ; and there's a neighbour island too, where the men will be all interest. Oh, what a precious generation will that be, which the men of the island shall propagate out of the women of the continent !

Re-enter Phædra.

And so much for prophecy ; for she's here again, and I must love her, in spite of me.

Phæd. Well, Sofia, and how go matters ?

Merc. Our army is victorious.

Phæd. And my servant, Judge Gripus ?

Merc. A voluptuous gormand.

Phæd. But has he gotten wherewithal to be voluptuous ? Is he wealthy ?

Merc. He sells justice as he uses, fleeces the rich rebels, and hangs up the poor.

Phæd. Then, while he has money he may make love to me. Has he sent me no token ?

Merc. Yes, a kiss ; and by the same token, I am to give it you, as a remembrance from him.

Phæd. How now, impudence ! A beggarly serving-man presume to kiss me !

Merc. Suppose I were a god, and should make love to you ?

Phæd. I would first be satisfied whether you were a poor god or a rich god.

Merc. Suppose I were Mercury, the god of merchandise ?

Phæd. What, the god of small wares and fripperies, of pedlars and pilferers ?

Merc. [*Aside.*] How the gipsy despises me !

Phæd. I had rather you were Plutus, the god of money, or Jupiter in a golden shower. There was a god for us women ! He had the art of making love. Dost thou think that kings, or gods either, get mistresses by their good faces ? No, 'tis the gold and the presents they can make : there's the prerogative they have over their fair subjects.

Merc. All this notwithstanding, I must tell you, pretty Phædra, I am desperately in love with you.

Phæd. And I must tell thee, ugly Sofia, thou hast not wherewithal to be in love.

Merc. Yes, a poor man may be in love, I hope.

Phæd. I grant, a poor rogue may be in love; but he can never make love. Alas, Sofia! thou hast neither face to invite me, nor youth to please me, nor gold to bribe me; and, besides all this, thou hast a wife—Poor, miserable Sofia!—What, ho, Bromia!

Merc. Oh, thou merchie's creature! why dost thou conjure up that sprite of a wife?

Phæd. To rid myself of that devil of a poor lover. Since you are so lovingly disposed, I'll put you together. What, Bromia, I say, make haste.

Merc. Since thou wilt call her, she shall have all the cargo I have gotten in the wars.

Phæd. Why, what have you gotten, good gentleman soldier, besides a legion of—— [Snaps her fingers.]

Merc. When the enemy was routed, I had the plundering of 'a tent.

Phæd. That's to say, a house of canvas, with moveables of straw——Make haste, Bromia——

Merc. But it was the general's own tent.

Phæd. You durst not fight, I'm certain; and therefore came last in, when the rich plunder was gone beforehand. Will you come, Bromia?

Merc. Pr'ythee, do not call so loud——A great goblet, that holds a gallon.

Phæd. Of what was that goblet made? Answer quickly; for I am just calling very loud——Bro——

Merc. Of beaten gold. Now call aloud, if thou dost not like the metal.

Phæd. Bromia!

[Very softly.]

Merc. That struts in this fashion, with his arms a-kimbo, like a city magistrate; and a great bouncing belly, like a hostess with child of a kilderkin of wine. Now what say you to that present, Phædra?

Phæd. Why, I am considering——

Merc. What, I pr'ythee?

Phæd. Why, how to divide the business equally; to take

take the gift, and refuse the giver, thou art so damnable ugly and so old.

Merc. [*Aside.*] Oh, that I was not confined to this ungodly shape to-day! But Gripus is as old and as ugly too.

Phæd. But Gripus is a person of quality, and my lady's uncle; and if he marries me, I shall take place of my lady. Hark, your wife! she has sent her tongue before her. I hear the thunder-clap already; there's a storm approaching.

Merc. Yes, of thy brewing, I thank thee for it: Oh, how I should hate thee now, if I could leave loving thee!

Phæd. Not a word of the dear golden goblet, as you hope for—you know what, Sofia.

Merc. You give me hope then—

Phæd. Not absolutely hope neither: but gold is a great cordial in love matters; and the more you apply of it, the better.—[*Aside.*] I am honest, that's certain; but when I weigh my honesty against the goblet, I am not quite resolved on which side the scale will turn.

[*Exit Phædra.*]

Merc. [*Aloud.*] Farewel, Phædra; remember me to my wife, and tell her——

Enter Bromia.

Brom. Tell her what? Traitor! that you are going away without seeing her.

Merc. That I am doing my duty, and following my master.

Brom. Umph——so brisk too! Your master could leave his army in the lurch, and come galloping home at midnight, and steal to bed as quietly as any mouse, I warrant you: my master knew what belonged to a married life; but you, sirrah——You trencher-carrying rascal, you worse than dunghill-cock! that stood clapping your wings and crowing without doors, when you should have been at roost, you villain!—

Merc. Hold your peace, dame Partlet, and leave your cackling: my master charged me to stand centry without doors.

Brom. My master! I dare swear thou bely'st him; my master's more a gentleman than to lay such an unrea-

rea-

reasonable command upon a poor distressed married couple, and after such an absence too. No, there's no comparison between my master and thee, thou sneakish.

Merc. No more than there is betwixt my lady and you, Bromia. You and I have had our time in a civil way, spouse, and much good love has been betwixt us: but we have been married fifteen years, I take it; and that hightly toighty business ought, in conscience, to be over.

Brom. Marry come up, my saucy companion! I am neither old, nor ugly enough, to have that said to me.

Merc. But will you hear reason, Bromia? My lord and my lady are yet in a manner bride and bridegroom;—do but think in decency, what a jest it would be to the family, to see two venerable old married people, ogling and leering, and fighting out fine tender things to one another!

Brom. How now, traitor! darest thou maintain that I am past the age of having fine things said to me?

Merc. Not so, my dear; but certainly I am past the age of saying them.

Brom. Thou deservest not to be yoked with a woman of honour, as I am, thou perjured villain!

Merc. Ay, you are too much a woman of honour, to my sorrow; many a poor husband would be glad to compound for less honour in his wife, and more quiet. Be honest and continent in thy tongue, and do thy work with every thing else about thee.

Brom. Thou wouldst have me a woman of the town, wouldst thou! to be always speaking my husband fair, to make him digest his cuckoldom more easily: wouldst thou be a wittal, with a vengeance to thee? I am resolved I'll scour thy hide for that word.

[*Holds up her ladle at him.*

Merc. Thou wilt not strike thy lord and husband, wilt thou? [*She courses him about; Mercury running about.*]
[*Aside.*] Was ever poor deity so hen-pecked as I am!—Nay, then 'tis time to charm her asleep with my enchanted rod,—before I am disgraced or ravished—

[*Plucks out his caduceus, and strikes her upon the shoulder with it.*

Brom. What, art thou rebelling against thy anointed wife!

wife! I'll make thee——How now!——What, has the rogue bewitched me! I grow dull and stupid on the sudden——I can neither stir hand nor foot——[*Cawing.*]——I can't so much as wag my tongue——neither; and that's the last live——ing part about a——woman——

[*Falls down.*]

Merc. [*Alone.*] Lord, what have I suffered, for being but a counterfeit married man one day! If ever I come to his house, as a husband again——then——And yet that then was a lie too——For while I am in love with this young gipsy, Phadra, I must return——But lie thou there, thou type of Juno; thou that wantest nothing of her tongue, but the immortality. If Jupiter ever let thee set foot where she is, Juno will have a rattling second of thee.

For two such tongues will break the poles asunder;
And, hourly scolding, make perpetual thunder.

[*Exit Mercury.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE, before Amphitryon's Palace.

Amphitryon and Sofia.

AMPHITRYON.

NOW, firrah, follow me into the house——thou shalt be convinced at thy own cost, villain! What horrible lies hast thou told me! Such improbabilities, such stuff, such nonsense!——

Sof. I am but a slave, and you are master; and a poor man is always to lie, when a rich man is pleased to contradict him: but as sure as this is our house——

Am. So sure 'tis thy place of execution.

Sof. Hold, dear Sir! if I must have a second beating, in conscience let me strip first, that I may show you the black and blue streaks upon my sides and shoulders. I am sure I suffered them in your service.

Am. To what purpose wouldst thou show them?

Sof. Why, to the purpose that you may not strike me upon

upon the fore places; and that as he beat me the last night cross-ways, so you would please to beat me long-ways, to make clean work on't, that at least my skin may look like chequer-work.

Am. This request is too reasonable to be refused: but, that all things may be done in order, tell me over again the same story, with all the circumstances of thy commission; that a blow may follow in due form for every lie. To repetition, rogue, to repetition.

Sof. No, it shall be all lie if you please, and I'll eat my words to save my shoulders.

Am. Ay, firrah, now you find you are to be disproved; but 'tis too late: to repetition, rogue, to repetition.

Sof. With all my heart, to any repetition but the cudgel. But would you be pleased to answer me one civil question; Am I to use complaisance to you, as to a great person, that will have all things said your own way; or, am I to tell you the naked truth alone, without the ceremony of a farther beating?

Am. Nothing but the truth, and the whole truth; so help thee cudgel.

Sof. That's a damned conclusion of a sentence: but since it must be so—Back and fides, at your own peril—I set out from the port in an unlucky hour; I went darkling, and whistling, to keep myself from being afraid; mumbling curses betwixt my teeth, for being sent at such an unnatural time of night.

Am. How, firrah, cursing and swearing against your lord and master! take—— [Going to strike.]

Sof. Hold, Sir—pray consider, if this be not unreasonable, to strike me for telling the whole truth, when you commanded me: I'll fall into my old dog-trot of lying again, if this must come of plain dealing.

Am. To avoid impertinences, make an end of your journey; and come to the house: what found you there?

Sof. I found before the door a swinging fellow, with all my shapes and features, and accoutered also in my habit.

Am. Who was that fellow?

Sof. Who should it be, but another Sofia! a certain kind of another me: who knew all my unfortunate
com-

‘ commission, precisely to a word, as well as I Sofia ; as
‘ being sent by yourself from the port, upon the same
‘ errand to Alcmena.

‘ *Am.* What gross absurdities are these ?

‘ *Sof.* Oh, lord, Oh, lord ! what absurdities ? as plain
‘ as any packstaff. That other me, had posted himself
‘ there before me, me.—You won’t give a man leave to
‘ speak poetically now ; or, else I would say, that I was
‘ arrived at the door, before I came thither.

‘ *Am.* This must either be a dream, or drunkenness,
‘ or madness in thee. Leave your buffooning and ly-
‘ ing, I am not in humour to bear it, sirrah.

‘ *Sof.* I would you should know I scorn a lie, and am
a man of honour in every thing, but just fighting. I tell
you once again, in plain sincerity and simplicity of heart,
that, before last night, I never took myself but for one
single individual Sofia ; but, coming to our door, I found
myself, I know not how, divided, and, as it were, split
into two Sofias.

Am. Leave buffooning : I see you would make me
laugh ; but you play the fool scurvily.

Sof. That may be : but if I am a fool, I am not the
only fool in this company.

Am. How now, impudence ! I shall——

Sof. Be not in wrath, Sir : I meant not you. I cannot
possibly be the only fool ; for if I am one fool, I must
certainly be two fools ; because, as I told you, I am
double.

Am. That one should be two is very probable !—A
man had need of patience to endure this gibberish—be
brief, and come to a conclusion——

Sof. What would you have, Sir ? I came thither, but
the t’other I was there before me ; for that there were
two I’s, is as certain, as that I have two eyes in this
head of mine. This I, that am here, was weary : the
t’other I was fresh : this I was peaceable, and t’other I
was a hectoring bully I.

‘ *Am.* And thou expectest I should believe thee ?

‘ *Sof.* No, I am not so unreasonable ; for I could
‘ never have believed it myself, if I had not been well
‘ beaten into it : but a cudgel, you know, is a con-
‘ vincing argument in a brawny fist. What shall I say,
‘ but

‘ but that I was compelled at last to acknowledge myself? I found that he was very I, without fraud, cozen, or deceit. Besides, I viewed myself, as in a mirror, from head to foot—he was handsome, of a noble presence, a charming air, loose and free in all his motions—and saw he was so much I, that I should have reason to be better satisfied with my own person, if his hands had not been a little of the heaviest.’

Am. Once again to a conclusion: say you passed by him, and entered into the house.

Sof. I am a friend to truth, and say no such thing: he defended the door, and I could not enter.

Am. How, not enter!

Sof. Why, how should I enter? unless I were a sprite to glide by him, and shoot myself through locks, and bolts, and two-inch boards?

Am. Oh, coward! Didst thou not attempt to pass?

Sof. Yes; and was repulsed, and beaten for my pains.

Am. Who beat thee?

Sof. I beat me.

Am. Didst thou beat thyself?

Sof. I don't mean I, here: but the absent me beat me here present.

Am. There's no end of this intricate piece of nonsense.

Sof. 'Tis only nonsense, because I speak it who am a poor fellow; but it would be sense, and substantial sense, if a great man said it, that was backed with a title, and the eloquence of ten thousand pounds a year.

Am. No more—but let us enter. Hold; my Alcmena is coming out, and has prevented me! How strangely will she be surprized to see me here, so unexpectedly!

Enter Alcmena and Phædra.

Alc. [*To Phæd.*] Make haste after me to the temple; that we may thank the gods for this glorious success, which Amphitryon has had against the rebels. Oh, heaven!

[*Seeing him.*]

Am. Those heav'ns, and all the blest inhabitants,

[*Saluting her.*]

Grant, that the sweet rewarder of my pains

May still be kind, as on our nuptial night.

Alc. So soon return'd!

Am.

Am. So soon return'd ! Is this my welcome home ?

[Stepping back.]

So soon return'd, says I am come unwish'd !

'This is no language of desiring love :

Love reckons hours for months, and days for years ;

And every little absence is an age.

Alc. What says, my lord ?

Am. No, my Alcmena, no :

True love by its impatience measures time,

And the dear object never comes too soon.

Alc. Nor ever came you so, nor ever shall :

But you yourself are chang'd from what you were,

' Pall'd in desires, and surfeited of blifs ;'

Not such as when last night at your return

I flew with transport to your clasping arms.

Am. How's this ?

Alc. Did you not read your welcome in my eyes ?

Did you not hear it in my falt'ring voice ?

Did not the pleasing tumult shake my frame,

Nature's spontaneous proof of sudden joy,

Which no false love can feign !

Am. What's this you tell me ?

Alc. Far short of truth, by Heav'n !

My proofs of joy, with joy you then receiv'd,

And gave with usury back. At break of day

You left me with a sigh ; you now return,

'Though not unwish'd, yet surely unexpected ;

And why shou'd my surprize be thought a crime ?

Am. I left you with a sigh at break of day !——

Alc. Yes, for the camp,——have you forgot, *Am.*

Am. Or, have you dream'd, Alcmena ? *[phitryon ?]*

Perhaps some kind, revealing deity,

Has whisper'd, in your sleep, the pleasing news

Of my return ; and you believ'd it real !

Alc. Some melancholy vapour, sure, has seiz'd

Your brain, Amphitryon, and disturb'd your sense :

Or yesternight is not so long a time,

But you might spare my blushes, and remember

How kind a welcome to my arms I gave you.

Am. I thank you for my melancholy vapour.

Alc. 'Tis but a just requital for my dream.

D

Plad.

Phæd. If my master thinks fit thus to angle for a quarrel, I think he had no great reason to come back.

[In the mean time Amph. and Alc. walk by themselves, and frown at each other as they meet.]

Am. You dare not justify it to my face.

Alc. Not what?

Am. That I return'd before this hour.

Alc. You dare not, sure, deny you came last night, And staid till break of day.

Am. Oh, impudence! — Why, *Sofia*!

Sof. Nay, I say nothing; for all things here may go by enchantment (as they did with me) for ought I know.

Alc. Speak, *Phædra*, was he here?

Phæd. You know, Madam, I am but a chamber-maid; and by my place, I am to forget all that was done over night in love-matters, — unless my master please to rub up my memory with another diamond.

Am. Now in the name of all the gods, *Alcmena*, A little recollect your scatter'd thoughts, And weigh what you have said.

Alc. I weigh'd it well, *Amphitryon*, e'er I spoke; And she, and *Bromia*, all the slaves and servants, Can witness they beheld you when you came: If other proof be wanting, tell me how I came to know your fight, your victory, The death of *Pterelas* in single combat? —

Am. *[Turning angrily to Sofia.]* Now, rascal! — you did not get into the house And deliver my message, did you? *[Going to strike him.]*

Sof. Hold, Sir, for the sake of truth and mercy! — Dear Madam! *[To Alcmena.]* as your gentle nature is a friend to distressed innocence, interpose in my behalf.

Alc. *[To Amph.]* Why will you not, *Amphitryon*, answer me?

What in my question can have turn'd your rage On this poor slave?

Am. What but gross falsehoods, which he forg'd to mock me:

And you abet him — But for this —

[Is again going to strike Sofia.]

Sof. Nay, dear Sir, do not punish me unheard.

Am. Did you not tell me —

Sof.

Sof. Yes, I did tell you—and I told you truly, that when I would have gone into the house I was beaten away.

Am. Well, firrah, and don't it now appear by what Alcmena says, that you did get in? How else could she know the news I sent you with, rascal?

Sof. And don't it appear by my back and shoulders, that I was beaten away? But you will not let a man produce his witnesses——

Am. Did you not get in? Answer me that, rogue, directly, and without equivocation.

Sof. Why, yes, it is true—and I must confess that in some sense, it may be said, I did get it; though it may also, in a certain sense, be truly said, that I was beaten away.

Am. Why thou impudent, prevaricating——

Sof. Sir, let me beseech you, that reason may predominate for my sake, and that you would make such distinctions as the nature of my case requires: it is true that I did get in, and it is true that I did not get in; this I, that is here now, did not get in, but was beaten away by t'other I; but that other I did get in, and was not beaten away;—there is a me me, and there is a he me——

Am. Audacious slave! 'twere infancy to spare thee.

Phæd. Do, my Lord; pray spare him till he has told the rest of his story; it is but beating him a little the more when he has done.

Sof. [*Earnestly to Phædra.*] It was at that very door, there it is—here was one I, and there was t'other.

Phæd. What, you mean that you squinted, and looked two ways at once.

Sof. I mean no such thing—[*He now turns from her and addresses Alcmena.*] 'It is not easy to make one self understood in these nice cases: but I say——hem! I say, that I being become the duplicate of myself, as to the body, and the understanding, did notwithstanding find that there was a diversity of the will, and that both in action and in sufferance——'

Am. [*Fiercely pulling him away.*] Begone——thy folly tortures me to madness.

Alc. [*Interposing.*] The same strange phrensy has possess'd you both ;

It was from you, not him, I heard the news.

Am. From me !

Alc. From you—and when you told me Pterelas's death, You gave this jewel, which he used to wear.

Am. This is amazing !

Have I already given you these diamonds,
The present I reserv'd ?

Alc. 'Tis an odd question :

You see I wear 'em ; look.

Am. Now answer, Sofia.

Sof. Yes, now I can answer with a safe-conscience, as to that point ; all the rest may be art magic—but, as for the diamonds, here they are, under safe custody.

Alc. Then what are these upon my arm ? [*To Sofia.*

Sof. Flints, or pebbles, or some such trumpery of enchanted stones. Yet now I think on't, Madam, did not a certain friend of mine present them to you ?

Alc. What friend ?

Sof. Why, another Sofia ; one that made himself Sofia in my despite, and also unfosiated me.

Am. Sirrah, leave your nauseous nonsense ; break open the seal, and take out the diamonds.

Sof. More words than one to a bargain, Sir, I thank you ; that's no part of prudence for me to commit burglary upon the seals. Do you look first upon the signet, and tell me in your conscience, whether the seals be not as firm as when you clapped the wax upon them.

Am. The signature is firm. [*Looking.*

Sof. Then take the signature into your own custody, and open it ; for I will have nothing done at my proper peril.

[*Giving him the casket.*

Am. Oh, heavens ! here's nothing but an empty space, the nest where they were laid. [*Breaking open the seal.*

Sof. Then if the birds are flown, the fault's not mine. Here has been fine conjuring work ; or else the jewel, knowing to whom it should be given, took occasion to steal out, by a natural instinct, and tied itself to that pretty arm.

Am. Can this be possible !

Sof. Yes, very possible : you, my lord Amphitryon,
: may

may have brought forth another you my lord Amphitryon ; as well as I Sofia have brought forth another me Sofia ; and our diamonds may have procreated these diamonds ; and so we are all three double.

Phæd. If this be true, I hope my golden goblet has gilded another golden goblet ; and then they may carry double upon all four. [*Aside.*]

Alc. My Lord, I have stood silent, out of wonder What you cou'd wonder at.

Am. A chilling sweat, a damp of jealousy, [*Aside.*]
Hangs on my brows, and clams upon my limbs.
I fear, and yet I must be satisfy'd :
And to be satisfy'd, I must dissemble.

Alc. Why muse you so, and murmur to yourself ?
If you repent your bounty, take it back.

Am. Not so ; but, if you please, relate what past
At our last interview.

Alc. That question wou'd infer you were not here.

Am. I say not so ;

I only would refresh my memory,
And have my reasons to desire the story.

Alc. The story is not long : you know I met you,
Kiss'd you, and press'd you close within my arms,

Am. I cou'd have spar'd that kindness. [*Aside.*]
And what did I ? [*To her.*]

Alc. With equal love return'd my warm embrace.

Am. Go on——

And stab me with each syllable thou speak'st. [*Aside.*]

Alc. I have no more to say.

Am. Why, went we not to bed ?

Alc. Why not ?

Is it a crime for husband and for wife

To go to bed, my lord ?

Am. Perfidious woman !

Alc. Ungrateful man !

Am. She justifies it too !

Alc. I need not justify : of what am I accus'd ?

Am. Of that prodigality of kindness

Giv'n to another, and usurp'd from me.

So bless me heav'n, if since my first departure,
I ever set my foot upon this threshold.

Alc. Then I, it seems, am false !

Am. As surely false, as what thou say'st is true. †

Alc. I have betray'd my honour, and my love!
And am a foul adulteress!

Am. What thou art,
Thou stand'st condemn'd to be, by thy relation.

Alc. Go, thou unworthy man; for ever go:
No more my husband! Go, thou base impostor;
Who tak'st a vile pretence to taint my fame;
And, not content to leave, wouldst ruin me.
Enjoy thy wish'd divorce: I will not plead
My innocence of this pretended crime:
I need not: do thy worst, I fear thee not:
For know, the more thou wou'dst expose my virtue,
Like purest linen laid in open air,
'Twill bleach the more, and whiten to the view.

Am. 'Tis well thou art prepar'd for thy divorce:
For, know thou too, that after this affront,
This foul indignity, done to my honour,
Divorcement is but petty reparation.
But, since thou hast, with impudence, affirm'd
My false return, and brib'd my slaves to vouch it,
The truth shall, in the face of Thebes, be clear'd;
Thy uncle, the companion of my voyage,
And all the crew of sea-men, shall be brought,
Who were embark'd and came with me to land,
Nor parted, till I reach'd this cursed door:
So shall this vision of my late return
Stand a detested lie; and woe to those
Who thus betray'd my honour.

Sof. Sir, shall I wait on you?

Am. No, I will go alone: expect me here.

[*Exit Amphitryon.*

Phed. Please you—that I—— [To Alcmena.

Alc. Oh, nothing now can please me:
Darkness, and solitude, and sighs, and tears,
And all th' inseparable train of grief,
Attend my steps for ever—— [Exit Alcmena.

Sof. What if I should lie now, and say we have been
here before? I never saw any good that came of telling
truth. [*Aside.*

Phed. He makes no more advances to me: I begin a
little

little to suspect, that my gold goblet will prove but copper.

[*Aside.*

Sof. Yes, 'tis resolv'd—I will lie abominably, against the light of my own conscience. For suppose the other *Sofia* has been here; perhaps that strong dog has not only beaten me, but also has misused my wife! Now, by asking certain questions of her, with a side-wind, I may come to understand how squares go; and whether my nuptial bed be violated.

[*Aside.*

Phæd. Most certainly he has learned impudence of his master, and will deny his being here; but that shall not serve his turn, to cheat me of my present!—[*Aside.*] Why, *Sofia*! What in a brown study?

Sof. A little *cogitabund*, or so, concerning this dismal revolution in our family.

Phæd. But that should not make you neglect your duty to me, your mistress.

Sof. Pretty soul: I would thou wert; upon condition that old *Bromia* were six foot under ground.

Phæd. What! is all your hot courtship to me dwindled into a poor unprofitable wish? You may remember, I did not bid you absolutely despair.

Sof. No, for all things yet may be accommodated, in an amicable manner, betwixt my master and my lady.

Phæd. I mean, to the business, betwixt you and me—

Sof. Why, I hope, we two never quarrell'd.

Phæd. Must I remember you of a certain promise that you made me at our last parting?

Sof. Oh, when I went to the army; that I should still be praising thy beauty to Judge *Gripus*, and keep up his affections to thee.

Phæd. No, I mean the business betwixt you and me this morning—that you promised me—

Sof. That I promised thee—I find it now: that strong dog, my brother *Sofia*, has been here before me, and made love to her.

[*Aside.*

Phæd. You are considering, whether or no you should keep your promise—

Sof. No, sweet creature, the promise shall not be broken; but what I have undertaken, I will perform like a man of honour.

Phæd.

Phæd. Then you remember the preliminaries of the present——

Sof. Yes, yes, in gross I do remember something; but this disturbance of the family has somewhat stupified my memory: some pretty *quelque chose*, I warrant thee; some acceptable toy, of small value.

Phæd. You may call a gold goblet, a toy: but I put a greater value upon your presents.

Sof. A gold goblet, say'st thou! Yes, now I think on't, it was a kind of a gold goblet; as a gratuity——

Phæd. No, no; I had rather make sure of one bribe before-hand, than be promised ten gratuities.

Sof. Yes, now I remember, it was, in some sense, a gold goblet, by way of earnest; and it contained——

Phæd. One large——

Sof. How, one large——

Phæd. Gallon.

Sof. No; that was somewhat too large, in conscience: it was not a whole gallon; but it may contain, reasonably speaking, one large——thimble-full. 'But gallons and 'thimble-fulls are so like, that, in speaking, I might 'easily mistake them.'

Phæd. Is it come to this? Out, traitor!

Sof. I had been a traitor, indeed, to have betrayed thee to the swallowing of a gallon; but a thimble-full of cordial-water is easily sipt off: and then, this same goblet is so very light too, that it will be no burden to carry it about with thee in thy pocket.

Phæd. Oh, apostate to thy love! Oh, perjured villain!

Enter Brómia.

What are you here, Brómia! It was telling him his own: I was giving him a rattle for his treacheries to you, his love: you see I can be a friend, upon occasion.

Bróm. Ay, chicken, I never doubted of thy kindness: but, for this fugitive——this rebel——this miscreant——

Sof. A kind welcome to an absent lover, as I have been.

Bróm. Ay; and a kind greeting you gave me, at your return; when you used me so barbarously this morning.

Sof. Ay, the t'other Sofia has been with her too; and has used her barbarously: barbarously, that is to say,
un-

uncivilly; and uncivilly, I am afraid that means too civilly. *[Aside.]*

Phæd. You had best deny you were here this morning! And by the same token——

Sof. Nay, no more tokens, for heaven's sake, dear Phædra. Now must I again ponder with myself a little, whether it be better for me to have been here, or not to have been here, this morning. *[Aside.]*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Phædra, my Lord's without; and will not enter till he has first spoken with you. *[Exit Servant.]*

Phæd. *[To him in private.]* Oh, that I could stay to help to worry thee for this abuse; but the best on't is, I leave thee in good hands—Farewel, thimble—To him, Bromia. *[Exit Phædra.]*

Brom. No; to be sure you did not beat me, and put me into a swoon, and deprive me of the natural use of my tongue for a long half hour: you did not beat me down with your little wand: but I shall teach you to use your rod another time——I shall.

Sof. Put her into a swoon, with my little wand, and so forth: that's more than ever I could do. These are terrible circumstances, that some Sofia or other has been here. *[Aside.]* Well, but Bromia—if I did beat thee down with my little wand, I warrant I was monstrous kind to thee afterwards.

Brom. Yes, monstrous kind indeed! You never said a truer word; for, when I came to kiss you, you pulled away your mouth, and turned your cheek to me.

Sof. Good.

Brom. How, good! Here's fine impudence: what, do you insult upon me too?

Sofia. No; I do not insult upon you:—but, for a certain reason, that I best know, I am glad that matter ended so fairly and peaceably betwixt us:

Brom. Yes, 'twas very fair and peaceably; to strike a woman down, and beat her most outrageously.

Sofia. Is it possible that I drubbed thee?

Brom. I find your drift——You would fain be provoking me to a new trial now: but, i'faith, you shall bring me to no more handy-blows—I shall make bold to trust to my tongue hereafter. You never durst have offered

offered to hold up a finger against me, till you went a trooping.

Sofia. Then I am conqueror; and I laud my own courage. This renown I have achieved by soldiership and stratagem. Know your duty, spouse, henceforward, to your supreme commander. *[Strutting.]*

[Enter Jupiter and Phædra.]

Phæd. Indeed, I wondered at your quick return.

Jup. Ev'n so almighty love wou'd have it, Phædra;
 ' And the stern goddess of sweet bitter cares,
 ' Who bows our necks beneath her brazen yoke.'
 I would have mann'd my heart, and held it out:
 But, when I thought of what I had possess'd;
 Those joys, that never end but to begin,
 My duty soon was overborne; I scorn'd
 The busy malice of censorious tongues,
 And, careless to conceal my stolen journey,
 Determin'd one day more to spend in Thebes.

Phæd. And yet a second time you left Alcemena,
 With looks unkind that threaten'd longer absence.
 'Twas but ev'n now——

Jup. Wou'd it had never been!
 I die to make my peace.

Phæd. 'Tis difficult.

Jup. But nothing is impossible to love;
 To love like mine: for I have prov'd its force.
 If I submit, there's hope.

Phæd. It is possible I may solicit for you.

Jup. But wilt thou promise me to do thy best?

Phæd. Why, I promise nothing—unless you begin
 To promise first. *[Curs'ling.]*

Jup. I wo'not be ungrateful.

Phæd. Well; I'll try to bring her to you.

Jup. That's all I ask:

And I will so reward thee, gentle Phædra——

Phæd. What with the sweet sound of "gentle Phædra, and my kind advocate."——

Jup. No, there's a sound will please thee better.

[Throwing her a purse.]

Phæd. Ay, there's something of melody in this sound.
 I could dance all day, to the music of chink, chink.

[Exit Phæd.]
Jup.

Jup. Go, Sofia,
To Polidas, to Tranio, and to Gripus,
Companions of our war: invite 'em all
To join their pray'rs to smoothe Alcmena's brow;
And, with a solemn feast, to crown the day.

Sofia. [*Taking Jupiter about the knees.*] Let me embrace you, Sir.—[*Jupiter pushes him away.*] Nay, you must give me leave to express my gratitude. I have not eaten, to say eating, nor drank, to say drinking, never since our villainous encamping so near the enemy.

Jup. You, Bromia; see that all things be prepar'd
With that magnificence, as if Jove himself
Were guest, or master here.

Sofia. Or, rather, as much as if twenty Joves were to be guests, or masters here.

Brom. That you may eat for to-day and to-morrow.

Sofia. Or, rather again, for to-day and yesterday; and as many months backward, as I am indebted to my own belly.

Jup. Away, both of you.

[*Exeunt Sofia and Bromia severally.*]

Now I have pack'd him hence; thou, other Sofia,
(Who though thou art not present, hear'st my voice)
Be ready to attend me at my call,
And to supply his place.

Enter Mercury to Jupiter; Alcmena and Phædra also enter, but Alcmena seeing Jupiter, turns back, and retires frowning.

Jup. See, she appears!
Oh, stay.

[*Seeing Alcmena.*]

Merc. She's gone; and seem'd to frown at parting.

Jup. Follow, and thou shalt see her soon appear'd;
For I, who made her, know her inward state:
No woman, once well-pleas'd, can thoroughly hate.
I gave 'em beauty, to subdue the strong;
(A mighty empire, but it lasts not long.)
I gave 'em pride, to make mankind their slave;
But, in exchange, to men I flattery gave.
Th'offending lover, when he lowest lies,
Submits, to conquer; and but kneels, to rise.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Jupiter following Alcmena; Mercury and Phædra.

JUPITER.

OH, stay, my dear Alcmena! hear me speak.
Alc. No, I would fly thee to the ridge of earth,
 And leap the precipice, to 'scape thy flight.

Jup. For pity——

Alc. Leave me, thou ungrateful man!
 I hate myself, for having lov'd thee once.

Jup. Hate not the best and fairest of your kind:
 Nor can you hate your lover, tho' you would.
 Your tears, that fall so gently, are but grief:
 There may be anger; but there must be love.
 The dove that murmurs at her mate's neglect,
 But counterfeits a coyness-to be courted.

Alc. Courtship from thee, and after such affronts!

Jup. Is this that everlasting love you vow'd last night?

Alc. Think what thou wert, and who could swear too much?

Think what thou art, and that absolves the oath.

Jup. Can you forsake me for so small a fault?

'Twas but a jest, perhaps too far pursu'd;

'Twas but, at most, a trial of your faith,

How you could bear unkindness:

'Twas but to get a reconciling kiss,

A wanton stratagem of love.

Alc. See how he doubles, like a hunted hare:

A jest, and then a trial, and a bait——

Jup. Think me jealous, then.

Alc. Oh, that I could! for that's a noble crime;
 And which a lover can, with ease, forgive:

'Tis the high pulse of passion in a fever;

A sickly draught but shews a burning thirst:

Thine was a surfeit, not a jealousy;

And in that loathing of thy satiate love,

Thou saw'st the odious object with disdain.

Jup. Oh, think not that! for you are ever new——

Your fruits of love, like those of endless spring

In happy climes, where some are in the bud,

Some green, and ripening some, while others fall.

Alc.

Alc. Ay, now you tell me this. Your puny passion,
 Like the deprav'd desires of fretful sickness,
 Raves in short fits of craving and disgust.
 This morn, at break of day, you would be gone;
 Then chang'd your purpose, and came back; then rag'd;
 Because th' effect of chance was not foreseen;

Then left me in disgust, with insult too;
 And now, return'd again, you talk of love.
 But never hope to be receiv'd again!

You would again deny you were receiv'd,
 And brand my spotless fame.

Jup. I will not dare to justify my crime:—

No, I confess I have deserv'd your hate.

Too charming fair, I kneel for your forgiveness:

I beg, by those fair eyes, [Kneeling.]

Which gave me wounds that time can never cure,

Receive my sorrows, and restore my joys.

Alc. Unkind and cruel! I can speak no more.

Jup. Oh, give it vent, Alcmena, give it vent;

I merit your reproach, I would be curs'd;

Let your tongue curse me, while your heart forgives.

Alc. Can I forget such usage?

Jup. Can you hate me?

Alc. I'll do my best; for sure I ought to hate you.

Jup. That word was only hatch'd upon your tongue,
 It came not from your heart. But try again;

And if once more, you can but say, I hate you,

My sword shall do you justice.

Alc. Then—I hate you—

Jup. Then you pronounce the sentence of my death.

Alc. I hate you much—but yet I love you more.

Jup. To prove that love, then say, that you forgive
 For there remains but this alternative; [me:]

Resolve to pardon, or to punish me.

Alc. Alas! what I resolve appears too plain:

In saying that I cannot hate, I pardon.

Jup. But what's a pardon worth, without a seal?

Permit me, in this transport of my joy— [Kisses her hand.]

Alc. Forbear; I am offended with myself,

[Putting him gently away with her hand.]

That I have shewn this weakness—Let me go

Where I may blush alone—

[Going, and looking back on him.]

But come not you ;

Lest I should spoil you with excess of fondness,

And take you to my heart again.

[Exit Alc.

Jup. Forbidding me to follow, she invites me. [Aside,

This is the mould of which I made the fex :

I gave them but one tongue, to say us nay,

And two kind eyes, to grant. Be sure that none [To Mer.

Approach, to interrupt us.

[Exit Jup. after Alc.

Merc. Your Lady has made the challenge of reconciliation to my Lord. Here's a fair example for us two, Phædra.

Pbed. No example at all, Sofia ; for my Lady had the diamonds beforehand, and I have none of the gold goblet.

Merc. The goblet shall be forth-coming, if thou wilt give me weight for weight.

Pbed. Yes, and measure for measure too, Sofia ; that is, for a thimble-full of gold, a thimble-full of love.

Merc. What think you now, Phædra ? Here's a weighty argument of love, for you !

[Pulling out the goblet in a case from under his cloak.

Pbed. Now, Jupiter, of his mercy, let me kiss thee, Oh, thou dear metal !

[Taking it in both hands.

Merc. And Venus, of her mercy, let me kiss thee, dear, dear Phædra !

Pbed. Not so fast, Sofia ; there's an unlucky proverb in your way—Many things happen betwixt the cup and the lip, you know. .

Merc. Why, thou wilt not cheat me of my goblet ?

Pbed. Yes, as sure as you would cheat me of my virtue. I am yet but just even with you, for the last trick you played me. And, besides, this is but a bare retaining fee ; you must give me another, before the cause is opened.

Merc. Shall I not come to your bed-side to-night ?

Pbed. No, nor to-morrow night, neither : but this shall be my sweetheart in your place : 'tis a better bed-fellow, and will keep me warmer in cold weather. [Exit.

Merc. Now, what's the god of wit in a woman's hand ? This very goblet I stole from Gripus ; and he got it out of bribes too. But this is the common fate of ill-gotten goods, that, as they came in by covetousness, they go out by extravagance—

Enter

Enter Amphitryon.

Oh, here's Amphitryon again ! but I'll manage him above in the balcony. [Exit Merc.]

Am. Not one of those I look'd for, to be found !

Has some enchantment hid them from my sight ?

Perhaps, as *Sofia* says, 'tis witchcraft all.

Seals may be open'd, diamonds may be stol'n ;

But how I came, in person, yesterday,

And gave that present to *Alcmena's* hands,

That which I never gave, nor ever came,

Oh, there's the rock on which my reason splits !

Would that were all ! I fear my honour too !

I'll try her once again : she may be mad—

A wretched remedy ! but all I have,

To keep me from despair.

How now ! what means the locking up of my

Doors at this time of day ?

[Knocks.]

Merc. [Alone.] Softly, friend, softly. You knock as a lord, and as faintly, as a lord's footman, that was sent before him, to warn the family of his lordship's visit. Sure you think the doors have no feeling. What the devil are you, that rap with such authority ?

Am. Look out, and see : 'tis I.

Merc. You ! what you ?

Am. No more, I say, but open.

Merc. I'll know to whom first.

Am. I am one that can command the doors open.

Merc. Then you had best command them, and try whether they will obey you.

Am. Dost thou not know me ?

Merc. Pr'ythee, how should I know thee ? Dost thou take me for a conjurer ?

Am. What's this, Midsummer-moon ? Is all the world gone a madding ? Why, *Sofia* !

Merc. That's my name indeed : didst thou think I had forgot it ?

Am. Dost thou see me ?

Merc. Why, dost thou pretend to go invisible ? If thou hast any business here, dispatch it quickly ; I have no leisure to throw away upon such prattling companions.

Am. Thy companion, slave ! How dar'st thou use this insolent language to thy master ?

Merc. How! thou my master? By what title? I never had any other master but Amphitryon.

Am. Well, and for whom dost thou take me?

Merc. For some rogue or other; but what rogue I know not.

Am. Dost thou not know me for Amphitryon, slave?

Merc. How should I know thee, when I see thou dost not know thyself? Thou Amphitryon! In what tavern hast thou been, and how many bottles did thy business, to metamorphose thee into my Lord?

Am. I will so drub thee for this insolence —

Merc. How now, Impudence! are you threatening your betters? I should bring you to condign punishment, but that I have a great respect for the good wine, tho' I find it in a fool's noddle.

Am. What, none to let me in? Why Phædra! Bromia!

Merc. Peace, fellow; if my wife hears thee, we are both undone. At a word, Phædra and Bromia are very busy; and my Lady and my Lord must not be disturbed.

Am. Amazement seizes me!

Merc. At what art thou amazed? My Lord Amphitryon and my Lady Alcmena had a falling out, and are retired, without seconds, to decide the quarrel. If thou wert not a meddling fool, thou wouldst not be thrusting thy nose into other people's matters. Get thee about thy business, if thou hast any; for I'll hear no more of thee.

[Exit Mercury from above.]

Am. Bray'd by my slave, dishonour'd by my wife!

To what a desp'rate plunge am I reduc'd,

If this be true the villain says? But why

'That feeble if? It must be true; she owns it.

Now, whether to conceal or blaze th' affront?

One way, I spread my infamy abroad;

And t'other, hide a burning coal within,

'That preys upon my vitals. I can fix

On nothing, but on vengeance.

Enter Sofia, Polidas, Gripus, and Tranio.

Grip. Yonder he is, walking hastily to and fro before his door, like a citizen clapping his sides before his shop, in a frosty morning: 'tis to catch a stomach, I believe.

Sof. I begin to be afraid that he has more stomach to my sides and shoulders, than to his own victuals. How

he

he shakes his head, and stamps, and what strides he fetches ! He's in one of his damp'd moods again. I don't like the looks of him.

Am. Oh, my mannerly, fair-spoken, obedient slave, are you there ? I can reach you now, without climbing. Now we shall try who's drunk, and who's sober.

Sof. Why, this is as it should be. I was somewhat suspicious that you were in a pestilent humour. Yes, we will have a crash at the bottle, whenever your Lordship pleases. I have summon'd them, you see ; and they are notable toppers, especially Judge Gripus.

Grip. Yes, faith, I never refuse my glass, in a good quarrel.

Am. [To *Sof.*] Why, thou insolent villain ! I'll teach a slave how to use his master thus.

Sof. Here's a fine business towards ! I am sure I ran as fast as ever my legs could carry me, to call them. Nay, you may trust my diligence in all affairs belonging to the belly.

Grip. He has been very faithful to his commission, I'll bear him witness.

Am. How can you be witness where you were not present ? The balcony, firrah, the balcony !

Sof. Why, to my best remembrance, you never invited the balcony.

Am. What nonsense dost thou plead for an excuse of thy foul language, and thy base replies !

Sof. You fright a man out of his senses first, and blame him afterwards for talking nonsense. But 'tis better for me to talk nonsense, than for some to do nonsense ; I will say that, whatever comes on't. Pray, Sir, let all things be done decently. What, I hope, when a man is to be hanged, he is not truss'd upon the gallows, like a dumb dog, without telling him wherefore.

Am. By your pardon, gentlemen ; I have no longer patience to forbear him.

Sof. Justice, justice, my Lord Gripus ! as you are a true magistrate, protect me. Here's a process of beating going forward, without sentence given.

Grip. My Lord Amphitryon, this must not be. Let me first understand the demerits of the criminal.

Sof. Hold you to that point, I beseech your honour,

as you commiserate the case of a poor, innocent malefactor.

Am. To shut the door against me, in my very face ! to deny me entrance ! to brave me from the balcony ! to laugh at me ! to threaten me ! What proofs of innocence call you these ? But if I punish not this insolence——

[Is going to beat him, and is held by Polidas and Tranio.]
I beg you, let me go——

Sof. I charge you, in the king's name, hold him fast ; for you see he's bloodily disposed.

Grip. Now, what hast thou to say for thyself, Sofia ?

Sof. I say, in the first place——Be sure you hold him, gentlemen ; for I shall never plead worth one farthing, while I am bodily afraid.

Pol. Speak boldly ; I warrant thee.

Sof. Then, if I may speak boldly, under my Lord's favour—I do not say he lies neither ; no, I am too well bred for that ; but his lordship fibbs most abominably.

Am. Do you hear his impudence ? Yet will you let me go ?

Sof. No impudence at all, my Lord ; for how could I, naturally speaking, be in the balcony and affronting you, when, at the same time, I was in every street in Thebes, inviting these gentlemen to dinner ?

Grip. Hold a little. How long since was it, that he spoke to you from the said balcony ?

Am. Just now ; not a minute before he brought you hither,

Sof. Now speak, my witnesses.

Grip. I can answer for him, for this last half hour.

Pol. And I.

Tran. And I.

Sof. Now, judge equitably, gentlemen, whether I was not a civil, well-bred person, to tell my Lord he fibbs only.

Am. Who gave you that order to invite them ?

Sof. He that best might, yourself. By the same token, you bid old Bromia provide an 'twere for a god ; and I put in for a brace, or a leash ; no, now I think on't, it was for ten couple of gods, to make sure of plenty.

Am. When did I give thee this pretended commission ?

Sof. Why, you gave me this pretended commission just after

after you had given Phædra a purse of gold to bring you and my Lady together, that you might try to make up matters with her after your quarrel.

Am. Where, in what place, did I give this order?

Sof. Here, in this place, in the presence of this very door, and of that balcony; and if they could speak, they would both justify it.

Am. Oh, Heaven! these accidents are so surprising, the more I think of them, the more I am lost in my imagination.

Grip. Nay, he has told us some passages, as he came along, that seem to surpass the power of nature.

Sof. What think you now, my Lord, of a certain twin brother of mine, called Sofia? 'Tis a fly youth. Pray Heaven, you have not just such another relation within doors, called Amphitryon. It may be it was he that put upon me, in your likeness; and perhaps he may have put something upon your lordship too, that may weigh heavy upon the forehead.

Am. [*To those who hold him.*] Let me go—Sofia may be innocent, and I will not hurt him—Open the door; I'll resolve my doubts immediately.

Sof. The door is peremptory that it will not be opened without keys; and my brother, on the inside, is in possession, and will not part with them.

Am. Then 'tis manifest that I am affronted. Break open the door there.

Grip. Stir not a man of you to his assistance.

Am. Dost thou take part with my adulteress too, because she is thy niece?

Grip. I take part with nothing but the law; and to break the doors open, is to break the law.

Am. Do thou command them, then.

Grip. I can command nothing without my warrant; and my clerk is not here, to take his fees for drawing it.

Am. [*Aside.*] The devil take all justice-brokers—I curse him too, when I have been hunting him all over the town, to be my witness—But I'll bring soldiers to force open the door by my own commission.

[*Exit Amphitryon.*]

Sof. Pox o' these forms of law, to defeat a man of a dinner, when he's sharp set! 'Tis against the privilege of a free-

a free-born stomach ; and is no less than subversion of fundamentals.

Jupiter appears above in the balcony.

Jup. Oh, my friends, I am sorry I have made you wait so long ! You are welcome ; and the door shall be opened to you immediately. [Exit Jup.]

Grip. Was not that Amphitryon ?

Sof. Why, who should it be else ?

Grip. In all appearance it was he. But how got he thither ?

Pol. In such a trice too !

Tran. And after he had just left us !

Grip. And so much altered, for the better, in his humour ?

Sof. Here's such a company of foolish questions, when a man's hungry. You had best stay dinner, till he has proved himself to be Amphitryon in form of law. But I'll make short work of that business ; for I'll take mine oath 'tis he.

Grip. I should be glad it were.

Sof. How, glad it were ! with your damn'd interrogatories—when you ought to be thankful that so it is.

Grip. [*Aside.*] That I may see my mistress, Phædra, and present her with my great gold goblet.

Sof. If this be not the true Amphitryon, I wish I may be kept without doors, fasting, and biting my own fingers for want of victuals ; and that's a dreadful imprecation. I am for the inviting, eating, and treating Amphitryon ; I am sure 'tis he that is my lawfully begotten lord : and if you had an ounce of the justice in you, you ought to have laid hold on t'other Amphitryon, and committed him for a rogue, and an impossor, and a vagabond.

[The door is opened ; Mercury from within.]

Merc. Enter quickly, masters. The passage on the right-hand leads to the gallery, where my Lord expects you—For I'm called another way.

[Gripus, Tranio, and Polidas go into the house.]

Sof. I should know that voice, by a secret instinct. 'Tis a tongue of my family, and belongs to my brother, Sosia ! It must be so ; for it carries a cudgelling kind of sound in it. But, put the worst—let me weigh this matter wisely—Here's a beating and a belly-full, against no beating

beating and no belly-full. The beating is bad; but the dinner is good. Now, not to be beaten, is but negatively good; but, not to fill my belly, is positively bad. Upon the whole matter, my final resolution is, to take the good and the bad as they come together.

[Is entering; Mercury meets him at the door.]

Merc. Whither now, you kitchen-scum? From whence this impudence, to enter here without permission?

Sof. Most illustrious Sir, my ticket is my hunger. Shew the full bowels of your compassion, to the empty bowels of my famine.

Merc. Were you not charged to return no more? I'll cut you into quarters, and hang you upon the shambles.

Sof. You'll get but little credit by me. Alas, Sir, I am but mere carrion! Brave Sofia, compassionate coward Sofia; and beat not thyself, in beating me.

Merc. Who gave you that privilege, sirrah, to assume my name? Have you not been sufficiently warned of it, and received part of punishment already?

Sof. May it please you, Sir, the name is big enough for both of us. I would have obeyed you, and quitted my title to it; but, wherever I come, the malicious world will call me Sofia, in spite of me. I am sensible there are two Amphitryons; and why may not there be two Sofias? Let those two cut one another's throats, at their own pleasure; but you and I will be wiser, by my consent, and hold good intelligence together.

Merc. No, no; two Sofias would make but two fools.

Sof. Then let me be the fool, and be you the prudent person, and chuse for yourself some wiser name; or you shall be the elder brother, and I'll be content to be the younger, tho' I lose my inheritance.

Merc. I tell thee, I am the only son of our family.

Sof. Ah! then let me be your bastard brother, and the son of a whore—I hope that's but reasonable.

Merc. No, thou shalt not disgrace my father; for there are few bastards now-a-days worth owning.

Sof. Ah, poor Sofia! what will become of thee?

Merc. Yet again profanely using my proper name!

Sof. I did not mean myself—I was thinking of another Sofia, a poor fellow, that was once of my acquaintance,
unfortu-

unfortunately banished out of doors, when dinner was just coming upon the table.

Enter Phædra.

Phæd. Sofia, you and I must——Bless me! what have we here?—A couple of you! or do I see double?

Sof. I would fain bring it about, that I might make one of them; but he's unreasonable, and will needs incorporate me, and swallow me whole into himself. If he would be content to be but one and a half, 'twould never grieve me.

Merc. 'Tis a perverse rascal. I kick him, and cudgel him to no purpose; for still he's obstinate to stick to me; and I can never beat him out of my resemblance.

Phæd. Which of you two is Sofia? For t'other must be the devil.

Sof. You had best ask him, that has played the devil with my back and sides.

Merc. You had best ask him, who gave you the gold goblet.

Phæd. No, that's already given; but he shall be my Sofia, that will give me such another.

Merc. I find you have been interloping, sirrah.

Sof. No, indeed, Sir; I only promised her a gold thimble; which was as much as comes to my proportion of being Sofia.

Phæd. This is no Sofia for my money. Beat him away, t'other Sofia; he grows insufferable.

Sof. [*Aside.*] Would I were valiant, that I might beat him away, and succeed him at the dinner; for a pragmatistical son of a whore, as he is.

Merc. What's that you are muttering betwixt your teeth, of a son of a whore, sirrah?

Sof. I am sure I meant you no offence; for, if I am not Sofia, I am the son of a whore, for ought I know; and, if you are Sofia, you may be the son of a whore, for ought you know.

Merc. Whatever I am, I will be Sofia as long as I please; and whenever you visit me, you shall be sure of the civility of the cudgel.

Sof. If you will promise to beat me into the house, you may begin when you please with me; but to be beaten out

out of the house, at dinner-time, flesh and blood can never bear it.

[*Mercury beats him about, and Sofia is still making towards the door: but Mercury gets betwixt; and at length drives him off the stage.*]

Phad. In the name of wonder, what are you that are Sofia, and are not Sofia?

Merc. If thou wouldst know more of me, my person is freely at thy disposing.

Phad. Then I dispose of it to you again; for 'tis so ugly, 'tis not for my use.

Merc. I can be ugly or handsome, as I please; go to bed old, and rise young. I have so many suits of persons by me, I can shift 'em when I will.

Phad. You are a fool then, to put on your work clothes when you come a wooing.

Merc. Go to: ask no more questions. I am for thy turn; for I know thy heart, and see all thou hast about thee. In thy right pocket—let me see—three love-letters from Judge Gripus, written to the bottom, on three sides; full of fustian passion, and hearty nonsense: as also in the same pocket, a letter of thine intended to him; consisting of nine lines and a half, scrawl'd and false spell'd, to shew thou art a woman.

Phad. Is the devil in you, to see all this? Now, for Heaven's sake, do not look in t'other pocket—

Merc. Nay, there's nothing there, but a bawdy lampoon, and——

Phad. [*Giving a great shriek.*] Look no farther, I beseech you——

Merc. And a silver spoon——

Phad. [*Shrieking.*] Ah!

Merc. Which you purloin'd last night from Bromia.

Phad. Keep my counsel, or I am undone for ever.

[*Holding up her hands to him,*

Merc. No: I'll mortify thee, now I have an handle to thy iniquity, if thou wilt not love me——

Phad. Well, if you'll promise me to be secret, I will love you: because indeed I dare do no other.

Merc. 'Tis a good girl—I will be secret; and further, I will be assisting to thee in thy fleehing: for thou and I were born under the same planet.

Phad.

Phad. And we shall come to the same end too, I'm afraid.

Merc. No, no; since thou hast wit enough already to cozen a judge, thou need'st never fear hanging.

Phad. And will you make yourself a younger man, and be handsome too, and rich? for you that know hearts, must needs know, that I shall never be constant to such an ugly old Sofia.

Merc. As to my youth and beauty, thou shalt know more of that another time. But, pr'ythee, why art thou so covetous of riches?

Phad. Why? because riches will procure every thing else that I can wish for.

Merc. But what if every thing else could be procur'd without riches; would not that do as well?

Phad. Why no; there's a pleasure, methinks, in having the money before one lays it out.

Merc. And yet, till it is laid out, it is as useless as so much dirt.

Phad. Aye—that may be—but when my heart dances to the thinking of money, it is not at leisure to think of that.

Merc. But suppose, that, without money, you could procure all that money could buy and more.

Phad. Why, as well as I love money, I have no objection to any good thing that money won't buy: but pray, how is it to be had?

Merc. To be had? why, upon the easiest terms in the world; only by a motion of the finger, or a stamp with the foot.

Phad. Phoo, that's impossible.

Merc. You shall make the experiment.

Phad. Shall I? so I will then, this minute. Must I stamp with my foot, or beckon with my finger?

Merc. First try to find out what you wish for, which I have known a difficult task for a woman.

Phad. Let me see—

Merc. Come, I'll help you—If you had been put into possession of Gripus's wealth yesterday, what wou'd you have had to entertain you to-day?

Phad. Why, I wou'd have had—let me see—I wou'd have had, just now, a band of the best music in

Thebes,

Theses, and a song in the character of Plutus in praise of money.

Merc. Well, now stamp with your foot.

[Phædra stamps; the music strikes up; she starts and screams out.]

Nay, nay, don't spoil the music——there's a friend of mine in the character of Plutus just coming in.

Phæd. I am very much obliged to you and your friend; but, if you please, I had rather keep a little farther out of his reach.

Merc. Pshaw, pshaw! stay where you are; my friends hurt nobody without my leave.

SONG *by a person who enters in the character of Plutus.*

Away with the fables philosophers hold,
Of pleasure that honestly gains without gold:
To be rich is the blessings of life to secure;
And the man must be certainly wretched that's poor.

The virtue that claims all the gods for its friends,
On gold, mighty gold, for existence depends:
What wrongs, without gold, can a mortal redress?
Or who, without gold, can get blessings, or bless?

' The weak can you succour, the worthy reward,
' If money be wanting, the gift and the guard?
In gold there is strength which no foe can withstand;
It conquers and triumphs, by sea and by land.

' In gold there are charms; for the youth and the fair,
' Sigh one for an heiress, and one for an heir.
' There's sense for each circle that listens demure,
' Consents with a grin, and cries "Yes to be sure!"
To be rich, if you trust your own ears and your eyes,
Is at once to be strong, to be fair, to be wise.

Phæd. There's for you now—what have you to say to that?

Merc. Why, Wit shall reply for me; and, to mortify you the more, it shall be in the character of a woman.

F

Phæd.

Phad. [*To Plutus, who is going*] Stay then, Mr. Plutus, if you please——let's hear what he'll say, by way of reply.

Merc. That's but an ill-natur'd experiment ; for Wit and Wealth have no kindness for one another : however, it shall be as you please for once.

[*Mercury waves his caduceus, a nymph enters, in the character of Wit.*]

S O N G .

Plutus, vain is all your vaunting,
Wit must life with bliss supply.
Gold, alas ! should Wit be wanting,
Would not find a joy to buy.

Wit alone creates the blessing,
Which, exchang'd for gold, you share :
Steril gold alone possessing,
What has man but gloom and care ?

Wit, of ev'ry art deviser,
Every passion can controul :
Can to pity move the miser,
Can with mirth dilate his soul.

Gold itself, on Wit depending,
Thence derives its utmost pow'r :
Folly all profusely spending,
Folly hoarding all is poor.

Phad. To her, Mr. Plutus.

D U E T .

Plut. In vain wou'd your jargon our senses bewitch,
D'ye tell me that gold will not make a man rich ?

Wit. It is Wit, Wit alone, that can keep it or use ;
And it cannot enrich those that hide it or lose.

Plut. Your quibbles I scorn.

Wit. But you cannot reply.

Plut. I boldly affirm——

Wit. What I boldly deny.

Plut. I'll bet you ten millions.

Wit

Wit. No wagers I lay.

Plut. You dare not.

Wit. I scorn you.

Plut. I hate you.

Wit. Away——

Plut. I go—may great Jove in his mercy decree :
That we never may meet, since we ne'er can agree.

Wit. Go you to the foolish.

Plut. And you to the poor.

Wit. The poor I can bless, and their blessings secure.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Phad. Well, for all these fine promises of Wit, I
have no great opinion of the happiness of poverty.

Merc. If you will not yield to argument, let experiment convince you.

[*Strikes the scene with his caduceus, and it changes to
a rural prospect, with a dance of peasants to country
music.*]

Well, what think you, Phædra—are these people
happy ?

Phad. If they are happy, they owe their happiness
as little to wit as to money, I believe.

Merc. I beg your pardon—if it had not been for
the arts that Wit has invented, they would have had
neither pipe nor dance : and mere ease and content are
but negative happiness at the best.

Phad. Well, I find 'tis in vain to dispute with you ;
but I shall hold my opinion for all that. Adieu——If
you make me happy according to my way of thinking,
perhaps I may make you happy according to yours.

[*Exit.*]

Merc. Woman——mere woman !—however, I love
thee but as mere woman, and only as mere woman
thou art mine.

Such bargain-loves as I with Phædra treat,

Are all the leagues and friendships of the great.

Our iron age is grown an age of gold :

'Tis who bids most—for all men wou'd be sold.

[*Exit.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Gripus and Phædra. Gripus has the goblet in his hand.

PHÆDRA.

YOU will not be so base to take it from me?
Grip. 'Tis my proper chattel: and I'll seize my own in whatever hands I find it.

Phæd. You know I only shew'd it to you to provoke your generosity, that you might out-bid your rival with a better present.

Grip. My rival is a thief: and I'll indite you for a receiver of stolen goods.

Phæd. Thou hide-bound lover!

Grip. Thou very mercenary mistress!

Phæd. Thou most mercenary magistrate!

Grip. Thou seller of thyself!

Phæd. Thou seller of other people! Thou weathercock of government: that when the wind blows for the subject, point'st to privilege; and when it changes for the sovereign, veer'st to prerogative.

Grip. Will you compound, and take it as my present?

Phæd. No: but I'll send thy rival to force it from thee.

Grip. When a thief is rival to his judge, the hangman will soon decide the difference. [*Exit Phædra.*]

Enter Mercury, with two swords.

Merc. [*Bowing.*] Save your good lordship.

Grip. From an impertinent coxcomb—I am out of humour, and am in haste—Leave me.

Merc. 'Tis my duty to attend on your lordship, and to ease you of that indecent burthen.

Grip. Gold was never any burthen to one of my profession.

Merc. By your lordship's permission, Phædra has sent me to take it from you.

Grip. What, by violence?

Merc. [*Still bowing.*] No; but by your honour's permission, I am to restore it to her, and persuade your lordship to renounce your pretensions to her.

Grip.

Grip. Tell her flatly, I will neither do one, nor t'other.

Merc. O, my good lord, I dare pass my word for your free consent to both.—Will your honour be pleas'd to take your choice of one of these?

Grip. Why these are swords: what have I to do with them?

Merc. Only to take your choice of one of them—which your lordship pleases; and leave the other to your most obedient servant.

Grip. What, one of these ungodly weapons? Take notice, I'll lay you by the heels, sirrah: this has the appearance of an unlawful bloody challenge.

Merc. You magistrates are pleased to call it so, my lord; but with us sword-men, 'tis an honourable invitation to the cutting of one another's throats.

Grip. Be answer'd; I have no throat to cut. The law shall decide our controversy.

Merc. By your permission, my lord, it must be dispatch'd this way.

Grip. I'll see thee hang'd before I give thee any such permission, to dispatch me into another world.

Merc. At the least, my lord, you have no occasion to complain of my want of respect to you: you will neither restore the goblet, nor renounce Phadra: I offer you the combat; you refuse it; all this is done in the forms of honour: it follows, that I am to affront, cudgel you, or kick you, at my own arbitrement; and I suppose, you are too honourable not to approve of my proceeding.

Grip. Here's a new sort of process, that was never heard of in any of our courts.

Merc. This, my good lord, is law in short-hand; without your long preambles, and tedious repetitions, that signify nothing but to squeeze the subject: therefore, with your lordship's favour, I begin.

[Phillips him under the chin.]

Grip. What's this for?

Merc. To give you an occasion of returning me a box o'th' ear; that so, all things may proceed methodically.

Grip. I put in no answer, but suffer a non-suit.

Merc. No, my lord ; for the costs and charges are to be paid : will you please to restore the cup ?

Grip. I have told thee, no.

Merc. Then from your chin, I must ascend to your lordship's ears.

Grip. Oh, oh, oh, oh !—Will thou never leave lugging me by the ears ?

Merc. Not till your lordship will be pleas'd to hear reason.

[*Pulling again.*]

Grip. Take the cup, and the devil give thee joy on't.

Merc. [*Still holding him.*] And your lordship will farther be graciously pleas'd, to release all claims, titles, and actions whatsoever to Phædra : you must give me leave to add one small memento, for that too.

[*Pulling him again.*]

Grip. I renounce her, I release her.

Enter Phædra.

Merc. [*To her.*] Phædra, my lord has been pleas'd to be very gracious, without pushing matters to extremity.

Phæd. I over-heard it all. But give me livery and scisin of the goblet, in the first place.

Merc. There's an act of oblivion shou'd be pass'd too.

Phæd. Let him begin to remember quarrels, when he dare ; now I have him under my girdle, I'll cap verses with him to the end of the chapter.

Enter Amphitryon and Guards.

Am. [*To Gripus.*] At last I have got possession without your lordship's warrant. Phædra, tell Alcmena I am here.

Phæd. I'll carry no such lying message—You are not here, and you cannot be here ; for, to my knowledge, you are above with my lady in the chamber.

Am. All of a piece, and all witchcraft ! Answer me precisely ; dost thou not know me for Amphitryon ?

Phæd. Answer me first : Did you give me a diamond, and a purse of gold ?

Am. Thou know'st I did not.

Phæd. Then by the same token, I know you are not the true Amphitryon.

Am. I'll undo this enchantment with my sword, and kill the forcerer: come up, gentlemen, and follow me. *[To the Guards,]*

Phad. I'll save you the labour, and call him down to confront you, if you dare attend him. *[Exit Phadras]*

Merc. *[Aside.]* Now the spell is ended, and Jupiter can enchant no more; or else Amphitryon had not entered so easily. *[Gripus is stealing off.]* Whither now, Gripus? I have business for you. If you offer to stir, you know what follows.

Enter Jupiter, followed by Tranio and Polidas.

Jup. Who dares to play the master in my house? What noise is this that calls me from above, Invades my soft recess,

And, like a tide, breaks in upon my love?

Am. O heav'ns! what's this I see?

Tran. What a prodigy!

Pol. How! two Amphitryons!

Grip. I have beheld th' appearance of two suns, But still the false was dimmer than the true; Here, both shine out alike,

Am. This is a sight, that, like the Gorgon's head, Chills all my blood, and stiffens me to stone.

I need no more enquire into my fate;

For what I see resolves my doubts too plain.

Tran. Two drops of water cannot be more like.

Pol. They are two very fables.

Merc. *[Aside.]* Our Jupiter is a great comedian, he counterfeits most admirably.

Am. Now I am gather'd back into myself; My heart beats high, and pushes out the blood,

[Drawing his sword,]

To give me just revenge on this impostor.

If you are brave, assist me—*[To the Guards.]*—Not one stirs!

What are all brib'd to take th' enchanter's part!

'Tis true, the work is mine; and thus—

[Going to rush upon Jupiter; and is held by Tranio and Polidas.]

Pol. It must not be.

Jup.

Jup. Give him his way : I dare the madman's worst.
But still take notice, that it looks not like
The true Amphitryon, to fly out at first
To brutal force : it shews he doubts his cause,
Who dares not trust his reason to defend it.

Am. [*Struggling.*] Thou base usurper of my name
and bed !

No less than thy heart's blood can wash away
Th' affronts I have sustain'd.

Tran. We must not suffer
So strange a duel, as Amphitryon
To fight against himself.

Pol. Nor think we wrong you, when we hold your
hands :

We know our duty to our general ;
We know the ties of friendship to our friend ;
But who that friend, or who that gen'ral is,
Without more certain proofs betwixt you two,
Is hard to be distinguish'd by our reason,
Impossible by fight.

Am. I know it ; and have satisfy'd myself,
I am the true Amphitryon.

Jup. See again,
He shuns the certain proofs ; and dares not stand
Impartial judgment, and award of right.
But since Alemena's honour is concern'd,
Whom, more than life and all the world, I love ;
This I propose, as equal to us both.
Tranio and Polidas, be you assistants ;
The guards be ready to secure th' impostor,
When once so prov'd, for public punishment ;
And, Gripus, be thou umpire of the cause.

Am. I am content ; let him proceed to examination.

Grip. [*Aside to Merc.*] On whose side wou'd you please
that I shou'd give the sentence ?

Merc. [*Aside to him.*] Follow thy conscience for once :
but not to make a custom of it neither ; ' nor to leave an
' evil precedent of uprightness to future judges—[*Aside.*]
' 'Tis a good thing to have a magistrate under correction.
' Your old fornicating judge dares never give sentence
' against him that knows his haunts.'

Pol.

Polid. Your Lordship knows I was master of Amphitryon's ship; and I desire to know of him, what passed in private betwixt us two at his landing, when he was just ready to engage the enemy?

Grip. Let the true Amphitryon answer first——

Jup. and Amp. together.—My Lord, I told him——

Grip. Peace both of you!—'Tis a plain case, they are both true; for they both speak together: but for more certainty, let the false Amphitryon speak first.

Merc. Now they are both silent——

Grip. Then 'tis as plain on t'other side, that they are false Amphitryons.

Merc. Which Amphitryon shall speak first?

Grip. Let the cholerick Amphitryon speak: and let the peaceable hold his peace.

Amp. [*To Polid.*] You may remember that I whispered you, not to part from the stern, one single moment.

Polid. You did so.

Grip. No more words then: I proceed to sentence.

Jup. 'Twas I that whispered him; and he may remember I gave him this reason for it, that if our men were beaten, I might secure my own retreat.

Polid. You did so.

Grip. Now again he's as true as t'other.

Tran. You know I was pay-master: what directions did you give me the night before the battle?

Grip. To which of the You's art thou speaking?

Am. I ordered you to take particular care of the great bag.

Grip. Why this is demonstration.

Jup. The bag that I recommended to you, was of tiger's skin; and marked Bera.

Grip. In sadness, I think, they are both jugglers; here's nothing, and here's nothing; and then *biccus docius*, and they are both here again.

Tran. You, peaceable Amphitryon, what money was there in that bag?

Jup. The sum, in gross, amounted just to fifty Attic talents.

Tran. To a farthing.

Grip. Paugh! Obvious, obvious.

Am.

Am. Two thousand pieces of gold were tied up in a handkerchief by themselves.

Tran. I remember it.

Grip. Then 'tis dubious again.

Jup. But the rest was not all filves; for there were just four thousand brass halfpence.

Grip. Being but brass, the proof is inconsiderable: if they had been silver, it had gone on your side.

Am. [*To Jup.*] Death and hell, you will not persuade me, that I did not kill Pterelas?

Jup. Nor you me, that I did not enjoy Alcmena?

Am. That last was poison to me—— [*Aside.*
Yet there's one proof thou canst not counterfeit:
In killing Pterelas, I had a wound
Full in the brawny part of my right arm;
Where still the scar remains: Now blush, impostor;
For this thou canst not show.

[*Bares his arm, and shews the scar, which they all look on.*

Omnes. This is the true Amphitryon.

Jup. May your lordship please——

Grip. No, sirrah, it does not please me: hold your tongue, I charge you, for the case is manifest.

Jup. By your favour then, this shall speak for me.

[*Bares his arm, and shews it.*

Tran. 'Tis just in the same muscle.

Polid. Of the same length and breadth; and the scar of the same bluish colour.

Grip. [*To Jup.*] Did not I charge you not to speak? 'Twas plain enough before; and now you have puzzled it again.

Am. Good gods, how can this be!

Grip. For certain there was but one Pterelas; and he must have been in the plot against himself too: for he was killed first by one of them; and then rose again out of respect to t'other Amphitryon, to be killed twice over.

Enter Alcmena, Phædra, and Bromia.

Ale. [*Turning to Phædra and Bromia.*] No more of this; it sounds impossible

That two should be so like, no difference found.

Phæd. You'll find it true.

Ale. Then where's Alcmena's honour and her fame?
Farewel my needless fear, it cannot be:

This is a case too nice for vulgar fight—
But let me come, my heart will guide my eyes
To point, and tremble to its proper choice.

[Seeing Amphitryon, goes to him.]

There neither was, nor is, but one Amphitryon;
And I am only his — *[Goes to take him by the hand.]*

Am. [Pushing her away from him.] Away, adulteress!

Jup. My gentle love, my treasure and my joy,
Follow no more that false and foolish fire,
That wou'd mislead thy fame to sure destruction!
Look on thy better husband, and thy friend,
Who will not leave thee liable to scorn,
But vindicate thy honour from that wretch,
Who wou'd by base aspersions blot thy virtue.

Alc. [Going to him, who embraces her.] I was indeed
mistaken! thou art he!

Thy words, thy thoughts, thy soul is all Amphitryon.
Th' impostor has thy features, not thy mind;
The face might have deceiv'd me in my choice,
Thy kindness is a guide that cannot err.

Am. What! in my presence to prefer the villain?
Oh, execrable cheat! I break the truce;
And will no more attend your vain decisions.
To this—and to the gods I'll trust my cause.

[Is rushing upon Jupiter, and is held again.]

Jup. Poor man! how I condemn those idle threats!
Were I dispos'd, thou might'st as safely meet
The thunder launch'd from the red arm of Jove.
But in the face of Thebes she shall be clear'd;
And what I am, and what thou art, be known.
Attend, and I will bring convincing proofs.

Am. Thou wouldst elude my justice; and escape;
But I will follow thee, through earth, and seas;
Nor hell shall hide thee from my just revenge.

Jup. I'll spare thy pains: it shall be quickly seen,
Betwixt us two, who seeks, and who avoids. —
Come in, my friends—and thou who seem'st Amphitryon;
That all who are in doubt, may know the true.

*[Jupiter re-enters the house; with him Amphitryon,
Alcmena, Polidas, Tranio, and Guards.]*

Merc. Thou, Gripus, and you, Bromia, stay with
Phædra;

[To Grip. and Brom. who are following.]

Let

Let their affairs alone, and mind we ours.

Amphitryon's rival shall appear a god:.

But know before-hand, I am Mercury;.

While we are not hear'ing, while Phædra is on earth.

Brom. But, an't please your Lordship, is my fellow-servant, Phædra, to be exalted into the heav'ns, and made a star?

Phad. When that comes to pass, if you look up a-nights, I shall remember old kindness, and vouchsafe to twinkle on you.

Enter Sofia, sleeping about him; and seeing Mercury, is starting back.

Sof. Here he is again; and there's no passing by him into the house, unless I were a sprite, to glide in through the key-hole.—I am to be a vagabond; I find.

Merc. Sofia, come back.

Sof. No, I thank you—you may whistle me long enough; a beaten dog has always the wit to avoid his master.

Merc. I permit thee to be Sofia again.

Sof. 'Tis an unfortunate name, and I abandon it: he that has an itch to be beaten, let him take it up for Sofia;—what have I said now! I mean for me; for I neither am nor will be Sofia.

Merc. But thou mayst be so in safety: for I have acknowledged myself to be God Mercury.

Sof. I am your most humble servant, good Mr. Mercury. But how shall I be sure that you will never assume my shape again?

Merc. Because I am weary of wearing so villainous an outside.

Sof. Well, well; as villainous as it is, here's old Bromia will be contented with it.

Brom. Yes, now I am sure that I may chastise you safely.

Sof.—Ay, but you had best take heed you attempt it; for ~~Mercury~~ has turned himself into me; so I may take the toy into my head, to turn myself into Mercury, and I may dunge you off, condignly.

Merc. In the mean time, be all my witnesses, that I take Phædra for my wife of the left hand; that is, in the nature of a lawful concubine.

Phad.

Phad. You shall pardon me for believing you, for all you are a god: for you have a terrible ill name below; and I'm afraid you'll get a footman, instead of a priest, to marry us.

Merc. But here's Gripus shall draw up articles betwixt us.

Phad. But he's terribly used to false conveyancing—Well, be it so; for my counsel shall overlook them before I sign. Come on, Gripus; that I may have him under black and white. [*Here Grip. gets ready pen, ink, and paper.*]

Merc. With all my heart.

Phad. [*To Grip.*] Begin, begin: Heads of articles to be made, &c. betwixt Mercury, god of thieves—

Merc. And Phædra, queen of gypsies—*Imprimis*, I promise to buy and settle upon her an estate, containing nine thousand acres of land, in any part of Boeotia, to her own liking.

Phad. Provided always, that no part of the said nine thousand acres shall be upon, or adjoining to mount Parnassus: for I will not be fobbed off with a poetical estate.

Merc. *Memorandum*, that she be always constant to me; and admit of no other lover.

Phad. *Memorandum*, unless it be a lover that offers more; and that the constancy shall not exceed the settlement.

Merc. *Item*, that she shall keep no male servants in her house.

Brom. Here's no provision made for children yet.

Phad. Well remembered, Bromia; I bargain that my eldest son shall be a hero, and my eldest daughter a king's mistress.

Merc. That is to say, a blockhead, and a harlot, Phædra.

Phad. That's true; but who dares call them so? Then for the younger children:—but now I think on't, we'll have no more, but master and mistress; for the rest would be but chargeable, and a burden to the nation.

Merc. Yes, yes; the second shall be a false prophet; he shall have wit enough to set up a new religion; and too much wit to die a martyr for it.

Phad. Oh, what had I forgot? there's pin-money,

and alimony, and separate maintenance, and a thousand things more to be considered; that are all to be tacked to this act of settlement.

Sof. I am a fool, I must confess—but yet I can see as far into a mill-stone as the best of you. I have observed, that you women-wits are commonly so quick upon the scent, that you often over-run it: now I would ask of Madam Phædra, that in case Mr. Heaven there, should be pleased to break these articles, in what court of judicature she intends to sue him?

Phad. The fool has hit upon't:—Gods, and great men, are never to be sued; for they can always plead privilege of peerage; and therefore for once, Monsieur, I'll take your word; for as long as you love me, you'll be sure to keep it: and in the mean time I shall be gaining experience how to manage some rich cully; for no woman ever made her fortune by a wit.

[It thunders; and the company within doors, Amphitryon, Alcmena, Polidas, and Trauio, all come running out, and join with the rest, who were on the Theatre before.]

Am. Sure 'tis some god! He vanish'd from our sight, And told us we should see him soon return.

Alc. I know not what to hope, nor what to fear.
A simple error, is a real crime;
And unconsenting innocence is lost.

[A second peal of thunder. After which, Jupiter appears in a machine.]

Jup. Look up, Amphitryon, and behold above
Th' impostor god, the rival of thy love:
In thy own shape see Jupiter appear,
And let that sight secure thy jealous fear.
Disgrace, and infamy, are turn'd to boast;
No fame, in Jove's concurrence, can be lost:
What he enjoys, he sanctifies from vice;
And by partaking stamps into a price.

Merc. *[Aside.]* Amphitryon and Alcmena both stand
mute, and know not how to take it.

Sof. *[Aside.]* Our sovereign lord Jupiter is a sly companion; he knows how to gild a bitter pill.

Jup. From this auspicious night shall rise an heir,
Great like his fire, and like his mother fair:

Wrong

Wrongs to redress, and tyrants to disseize;
Born for a world that wants a Hercules.
Monsters, and monster-men he shall engage,
And toil and struggle through an impious age.
Peace to his labours shall at length succeed;
And murm'ring men, unwilling to be freed,
Shall be compell'd to happiness, by need.

[Jupiter is carried back to Heaven.

Omnes. We all congratulate Amphitryon.

Sof. Ah, Brémia, Bromia, if thou hadst been as handsome and as young as Phædra! I say no more,—but somebody might have made his fortunes, as well as his master, and never the worse man neither.

But—down, ambition! let me not complain—

Enough that I am Sofia once again!

Though not a cuckold, yet content I'll be;

The great man's happiness is not for me.

But of myself shall I be robb'd no more?

Your voice, "ye learned Thebans," I implore—

Give me your suffrage, I'll be Sofia still;

Let bully Merc'ry there, do what he will.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by PHÆDRA.

*I*M thinking (and it almost makes me mad)
 How sweet a time those heathen ladies had.
 Idolatry was ev'n their gods own trade;
 They worshipp'd the fine creatures they had made.
 Cupid was chief of all the deities;
 And love was all the fashion in the skies.
 When the sweet nymph held up the lily hand,
 Jove was her humble servant, at command.
 The treasury of heav'n was ne'er so bare,
 But still there was a pension for the fair:
 In all his reign, adultery was no sin;
 For Jove the good example did begin.
 Mark, too, when he usurp'd the husband's name,
 How civilly he sav'd the lady's fame.
 The secret joys of love he wisely hid;
 But you, Sirs, boast of more than e'er you did.
 You teize your cuckolds, to their face torment them;
 But Jove gave his new honours, to content them:
 And, in the kind remembrance of the fair,
 On each exalted son bestow'd a star.
 For those good deeds, as by the date appears,
 His godship flourish'd full two thousand years.
 At last, when he and all his priests grew old,
 The ladies grew in their devotion cold;
 And that false worship would no longer hold.
 Severity of life did next begin;
 (And always does, when we no more can sin)
 That doctrine too, so hard, in practice lies;
 Then the next age may see another rise;
 Then pagan gods may once again succeed,
 And Jove, or Mars, be ready, at our need,
 To get young godlings, and so mend our breed.







Designed for Dods's British Theatre, May 6th 1777.

Roberts del.

*MR. DODD in the Character of TINSEL .
Have compassion on my Youth, & consider
I am but a Coxcomb.*

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
D R U M M E R:

OR, THE
HAUNTED HOUSE.

A COMEDY,

As written by JOSEPH ADDISON, Esq.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book.

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

*Falsis terroribus implet
Ut magnus.*

HOR.



L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exter-Exchange*, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVII.



P R E F A C E.

HAVING recommended this play to the town, and delivered the copy of it to the bookseller, I think myself obliged to give some account of it.

It had been some years in the hands of the author, and falling under my perusal, I thought so well of it, that I persuaded him to make some additions and alterations to it, and let it appear upon the stage. I own I was very highly pleased with it, and liked it the better, for the want of those studied similes and repartees, which we, who have writ before him, have thrown into our plays, to indulge and gain upon a false taste that has prevailed for many years in the British theatre. I believe the author would have condescended to fall into this way a little more than he has, had he, before the writing of it, been often present at theatrical representations. I was confirmed in my thoughts of the play, by the opinion of better judges, to whom it was communicated, who observed, that the scenes were drawn after Moliere's manner, and that an easy and natural vein of humour ran through the whole.

I do not question but the reader will discover this, and see many beauties that escaped the audience; the touches being too delicate for every taste in a popular assembly. My brother sharers were of opinion, at the first reading of it, that it was like a picture in which the strokes were not strong enough to appear at a distance. As it is not in the common way of writing, the approbation was at first doubtful, but has risen every time it has been acted, and has given an opportunity, in several of its parts, for as just and good action as ever I saw on the stage.

The reader will consider that I speak here, not as the author, but as the patentee ; which is, perhaps, the reason why I am not diffuse in the praises of the play, lest I should seem like a man who cries up his own wares, only to draw in customers.

RICHARD STEELE.



P R O L O G U E.

IN this grave age, when comedies are few,
 We crave your patronage for one that's new;
 Tho' 'twere poor stuff, yet bid the author fair,
 And let the scarcentis recommend the ware.
 Long have your ears been fill'd with tragic parts,
 Blood and blank-verse have harden'd all your hearts;
 If e'er you smile, 'tis at some party strokes,
 Round-heads and wooden-shoes are standing jokes;
 The same conceit gives claps and hisses birth,
 You're grown such politicians in your mirth!
 For once we try (though 'tis, I own, unsafe)
 To please you all, and make both parties laugh.
 Our author, anxious for his fame to-night,
 And bashful in his first attempt to write,
 Lies cautiously obscure and unreveal'd,
 Like ancient actors in a mask conceal'd.
 Censure, when no man knows who writes the play,
 Were much good malice merely thrown away.
 The mighty criticks will not blast, for shame,
 A raw young thing, who dares not tell his name:
 Good-natur'd judges will th' unknown defend,
 And fear to blame, lest they should hurt a friend;
 Each wit may praise it for his own dear sake,
 And hint he writ it, if the thing should take:
 But if you're rough, and use him like a dog,
 Depend upon it—he'll remain incog.
 If you should hiss, he swears he'll hiss as high,
 And, like a culprit, raise the hue and cry.
 If cruel men are still averse to spare
 These scenes, they fly for refuge to the fair.
 Tho' with a ghost our comedy be heighten'd,
 Ladies, upon my word, you shan't be frighten'd:
 Oh, 'tis a ghost that scorns to be uncivil,
 A well-spread, lusty, jointure-hunting devil:
 An am'rous ghost, that's faithful, fond, and true,
 Made up of flesh and blood—as much as you.
 Then, ev'ry evening, come in flocks, undaunted;
 We never think this house is too much haunted.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

*Drury-Lane.**Covent-Garden.*

Sir George Truman,
Tinsel,
Fantome, the drummer,
Vellum, Sir George Truman's
Steward,
 Butler,
 Coachman,
 Gardener,

Mr. Aickin.
 Mr. Dodd.
 Mr. Packer.
 Mr. Parsons.
 Mr. Baddeley.
 Mr. Moody.
 Mr. Baker.

Mr. Smith.
 Mr. Woodward.
 Mr. R. Smith.
 Mr. Shuter.
 Mr. Dunstall.
 Mr. Cushing.
 Mr. Morris.

W O M E N.

Lady Truman,
Abigail,

Mrs. Hopkins.
 Miss Pope.

Mrs. Ward.
 Mrs. Green.

THE D R U M M E R.

•• The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

SCENE, *A great Hall.*

Enter the Butler, Coachman, and Gardener.

BUTLER.

THERE came another coach to town last night, that brought a gentleman to enquire about this strange noise we hear in the house. This spirit will bring a power of custom to the George——If so be he continues his pranks, I design to sell a pot of ale, and set up the sign of the drum.

Coach. I'll give Madam warning, that's flat—I've always lived in sober families. I'll not disparage myself to be a servant in a house that is haunted.

Gard. I'll e'en marry Nell, and rent a bit of ground of my own, if both of you leave Madam; not but that Madam's a very good woman—if Mrs. Abigail did not spoil her——Come, here's her health.

But. 'Tis a very hard thing to be a butler in a house that is disturbed. He made such a racket in the cellar, last night, that I'm afraid he'll sour all the beer in my barrels.

Coach. Why then, John, we ought to take it off as fast as we can——Here's to you——He rattled so loud under the tiles, last night, that I verily thought the house would have fallen over our heads. I durst not go up into the cock-loft this morning, if I had not got one of the maids to go along with me.

Gard. I thought I heard him in one of my bed-posts.
I marvel

I marvel, John, how he gets into the house, when all the gates are shut.

But. Why, look ye, Peter, your spirit will creep you into an augre-hole——he'll whisk ye through a key-hole, without so much as jostling against one of the wards.

Coach. Poor Madam is mainly frightened, that's certain ; and verily believes it is my master, that was killed in the last campaign.

But. Out of all manner of question, Robin, 'tis Sir George. Mrs. Abigail is of opinion, it can be none but his honour. He always loved the wars ; and, you know, was mightily pleased, from a child, with the music of a drum.

Gard. I wonder his body was never found after the battle.

But. Found ! Why, ye fool, is not his body here about the house ? Dost thou think he can beat his drum without hands and arms ?

Coach. 'Tis master, as sure as I stand here alive ; and I verily believe I saw him last night in the town-cloſe.

Gard. Ay ! How did he appear ?

Coach. Like a white horse.

But. Phoo, Robin ! I tell ye, he has never appeared yet, but in the shape of the sound of a drum.

Coach. This makes one almost afraid of one's own shadow. As I was walking from the stable, t'other night, without my lanthorn, I fell across a beam, that lay in my way ; and faith, my heart was in my mouth. I thought I had stumbled over a spirit.

But. Thou might'st as well have stumbled over a straw. Why, a spirit is such a little thing, that I have heard a man, who was a great scholar, say, that he'll dance ye a Lancashire hornpipe upon the point of a needle. As I sat in the pantry, last night, counting my spoons, the candle, methought, burnt blue, and the spay'd bitch looked as if she saw something.

Coach. Ay, poor cur, she's almost frightened out of her wits.

Gard. Ay, I warrant ye, she hears him, many a time and often, when we don't.

But. My Lady must have him laid, that's certain, whatever it cost her.

Gard. I fancy, when one goes to market, one might hear of somebody that can make a spell.

Coach. Why, may not the parson of our parish lay him?

But. No, no, no; our parson cannot lay him.

Coach. Why not he, as well as another man?

But. Why, ye fool, he is not qualified. He has not taken the oaths.

Gard. Why, d'ye think, John, that the spirit would take the law of him? Faith, I could tell you one way to drive him off.

Coach. How's that?

Gard. I'll tell you immediately.—[Drinks.]—I fancy Mrs. Abigail might scold him out of the house.

Coach. Ay, she has a tongue that would drown his drum, if any thing could.

But. Pugh, this is all froth; you understand nothing of the matter. The next time it makes a noise, I tell you what ought to be done—I would have the steward speak Latin to it.

Coach. Ay, that would do, if the steward had but courage.

Gard. There you have it. He's a fearful man. If I had as much learning as he, and I met the ghost, I'd tell him his own. But, alack! what can one of us poor men do with a spirit, that can neither write nor read?

But. Thou art always cracking and boasting, Peter; thou dost not know what mischief it might do thee, if such a silly dog as thee should offer to speak to it. For ought I know, he might flea thee alive, and make parchment of thy skin, to cover his drum with.

Gard. A fiddlestick! tell not me—I fear nothing, not I; I never did harm in my life; I never committed murder.

But. I verily believe thee. Keep thy temper, Peter; after supper we'll drink each of us a double mug, and then let come what will.

Gard. Why, that's well said, John—An honest man, that is not quite sober, has nothing to fear—Here's to ye—Why, now if he should come this minute, here would I stand—Ha! what noise is that?

But. and Coach. Ha! where?

Gard.

Gard. The devil ! the devil ! Oh, no ; 'tis Mrs. Abigail.

But. Ay, faith ! 'tis she ; 'tis Mrs. Abigail ! A good mistake ; 'tis Mrs. Abigail.

Enter Abigail.

Ab. Here are your drunken fots for you ! Is this a time to be guzzling, when gentry are come to the house ! Why don't you lay your cloth ? How come you out of the stables ? Why are you not at work in your garden ?

Gard. Why, yonder's the fine Londoner and Madam fetching a walk together ; and methought they looked as if they should say they had rather have my room than my company.

But. And so forsooth being all three met together, we are doing our endeavours to drink this same drummer out of our heads.

Gard. For you must know, Mrs. Abigail, we are all of opinion that one can't be a match for him, unless one be as drunk as a drum.

Coach. I am resolved to give Madam warning to hire herself another coachman ; for I came to serve my master, d'ye see, while he was alive : but do suppose that he has no further occasion for a coach, now he walks.

But. Truly, Mrs. Abigail, I must needs say, that this same spirit is a very odd sort of a body, after all, to fright Madam, and his old servants, at this rate.

Gard. And truly, Mrs. Abigail, I must needs say, I served my master contentedly, while he was living ; but I will serve no man living (that is, no man that is not living) without double wages.

Ab. Ay, 'tis such cowards as you that go about with idle stories, to disgrace the house, and bring so many strangers about it : you first frighten yourselves, and then your neighbours.

Gard. Frightened ! I scorn your words : frightened quoth-a !

Ab. What, you sot, are you grown pot-valiant ?

Gard. Frightened with a drum ! that's a good one ! It will do us no harm, I'll answer for it : it will bring no blood-shed along with it, take my word. It sounds as like a train-band drum as ever I heard in my life.

But. Pr'ythee, Peter, don't be so presumptuous.

Ab.

Ab. Well, these drunken rogues take it as I could wish. *[Aside.*

Gard. I scorn to be frightened, now I am in for't; if old Dub-a-dub should come into the room, I would take him——

But. Pr'ythee, hold thy tongue.

Gard. I would take him——

[The drum beats: the Gardener endeavours to get off, and falls.]

But. and Coach. Speak to it, Mrs. Abigail.

Gard. Spare my life, and take all I have.

Coach. Make off, make off, good butler; and let us go hide ourselves in the cellar. *[They all run off.]*

Ab. *[Alone.]* So, now the coast is clear, I may venture to call out my drummer—But first let me shut the door, lest we be surpris'd. Mr. Fantome, Mr. Fantome! *[He beats.]* Nay, nay, pray come out: the enemy's fled—I must speak with you immediately——Don't stay to beat a parley.

[The back scene opens, and discovers Fantome with a drum.]

Fan. Dear Mrs. Nabby, I have overheard all that has been said, and find thou hast managed this thing so well, that I could take thee in my arms and kiss thee——If my drum did not stand in my way.

Ab. Well, o' my conscience, you are the merriest ghost! and the very picture of Sir George Truman.

Fan. There you flatter me, Mrs. Abigail: Sir George had that freshness in his looks, that we men of the town can not come up to.

Ab. Oh, death may have altered you, you know——Besides you must consider, you lost a great deal of blood in the battle.

Fan. Ay, that's right; let me look never so pale, this cut cross my forehead will keep me in countenance.

Ab. 'Tis just such a one as my master received from a cursed French trooper, as my lady's letter informed her.

Fan. It happens luckily that this suit of cloaths of Sir George's fits me so well——I think I can't fail hitting the air of a man with whom I was so long acquainted.

Ab.

Ab. You are the very man—I vow I almost start when I look upon you.

Fan. But what good will this do me, if I must remain invisible?

Ab. Pray what good did your being visible do you? The fair Mr. Fantome thought no woman could withstand him—But when you were seen by my Lady in your proper person, after she had taken a full survey of you, and heard all the pretty things you could say, she very civilly dismissed you for the sake of this empty noisy creature, Tinsel. She fancies you have been gone from hence this fortnight.

Fan. Why really I love thy Lady so well, that though I had no hopes of gaining her for myself, I could not bear to see her given to another, especially such a wretch as Tinsel.

Ab. Well, tell me truly, Mr. Fantome, have not you a great opinion of my fidelity to my dear Lady, that I would not suffer her to be deluded in this manner for less than a thousand pound?

Fan. Thou art always reminding me of my promise—Thou shalt have it, if thou canst bring our project to bear: dost not know, that stories of ghosts and apparitions generally end in a pot of money.

Ab. Why truly now, Mr. Fantome, I should think myself a very bad woman, if I had done what I do for a farthing less.

Fan. Dear Abigail, how I admire thy virtue!

Ab. No, no, Mr. Fantome, I defy the worst of my enemies to say I love mischief for mischief's sake.

Fan. But is thy Lady persuaded that I'm the ghost of her deceased husband?

Ab. I endeavour to make her believe so; and tell her every time your drum rattles, that her husband is chiding her for entertaining this new lover.

Fan. Pr'ythee make use of all thy art: for I'm tired to death with strolling round this wide old house, like a rat behind the wainscot.

Ab. Did not I tell you 'twas the purest place in the world for you to play your tricks in? There's none of the family that knows every hole and corner in it, besides myself.

Fan.

Fan. Ah, Mrs. Abigail! you have had your intrigues—

Ab. For you must know when I was a romping young girl, I was a mighty lover of Hide and Seek,

Fan. I believe by this time, I am as well acquainted with the house as yourself.

Ab. You are very much mistaken, Mr. Fantome: but no matter for that; here is to be your station to-night. This place is unknown to any one living besides myself, since the death of the joiner, who, you must understand, being a lover of mine, contrived the wainscot to move to and fro, in the manner that you find it. I designed it for a wardrobe for my lady's cast clothes. Oh, the stomachers, stays, petticoats, commodes, laced shoes, and good things, that I have had in it!—Pray, take care you don't break the cherry brandy bottle that stands up in the corner.

Fan. Well, Mrs. Abigail, I hire your closet of you, but for this one night—A thousand pounds, you know, is a very good rent.

Ab. Well, get you gone: you have such a way with you, there's no denying you any thing.

Fan. I am thinking how Tinsel will stare, when he sees me come out of the wall; for I am resolved to make my appearance to-night.

Ab. Get you in, get you in, my Lady's at the door.

Fan. Pray take care she does not keep me up so late as she did last night, or depend upon it, I'll beat the tattoo.

Ab. I'm undone, I'm undone——[*As he is going in.*] Mr. Fantome, Mr. Fantome, have you put the thousand pound bond into my brother's hand?

Fan. Thou shalt have it; I tell thee thou shalt have it.

[*Fantome goes in.*]
Ab. No more words——Vanish, vanish,

Enter Lady.

Ab. [*Opening the door.*] Oh, dear Madam, was it you, that made such a knocking? My heart does so beat—I vow you have frightened me to death——I thought, verily, it had been the drummer.

Lady T. I have been showing the garden to Mr. Tinsel; he's most insufferably witty upon us about this story of the drum.

Ab. Indeed, Madam, he's a very loose man : I'm afraid 'tis he that hinders my poor master from resting in his grave.

Lady T. Well, an infidel is such a novelty in the country, that I am resolved to divert myself a day or two at least with the oddness of his conversation.

Ab. Ah, Madam ! the drum began to beat in the house as soon as ever this creature was admitted to visit you. All the while Mr. Fantome made his addressee to you, there was not a mouse stirring in the family more than used to be——

Lady T. This baggage has some design upon me, more than I can yet discover. [*Afide.*]——Mr. Fantome was always thy favourite.

Ab. Ay, and should have been yours too, by my consent ! Mr. Fantome was not such a slight fantastical thing as this is——Mr. Fantome was the best built man one should see in a summer's day ! Mr. Fantome was a man of honour, and loved you. Poor soul, how has he sigh'd, when he has talk'd to me of my hard-hearted Lady——Well, I had as lief as a thousand pound you would marry Mr. Fantome.

Lady T. To tell thee truly, I loved him well enough till I found he loved me so much. But Mr. Tinsel makes his court to me with so much neglect and indifference, and with such an agreeable sauciness——Not that I say I'll marry him.

Ab. Marry him, quoth-a ! No, if you should, you'll be awakened sooner than married couples generally are——You'll quickly have a drum at your window.

Lady T. I'll hide my contempt of Tinsel for once, if it be but to see what this wench drives at. [*Afide.*]

Ab. Why, suppose your husband, after this fair warning he has given you, should sound you an alarm at midnight ; then open your curtains with a face as pale as my apron, and cry out with a hollow voice, what dost thou do in bed with this spindle-shank'd fellow ?

Lady T. Why wilt thou needs have it to be my husband ? He never had any reason to be offended at me. I always loved him while he was living ; and should prefer him to any man, where he is still. Mr. Tinsel is indeed
very

very idle in his talk; but I fancy, Abigail, a discreet woman might reform him.

Ab. That's a likely matter indeed! Did you ever hear of a woman who had power over a man when she was his wife, that had none while she was his mistress? Oh, there's nothing in the world improves a man in his complaisance, like marriage!

Lady T. He is, indeed, at present, too familiar in his conversation.

Ab. Familiar! Madam; in troth, he's downright rude.

Lady T. But that, you know, Abigail, shews he has no dissimulation in him——Then he is apt to jest a little too much upon grave subjects.

Ab. Grave subjects! he jests upon the church.

Lady T. But that, you know, Abigail, may be only to shew his wit——Then it must be owned he's extremely talkative.

Ab. Talkative, d'ye call it! he's downright impertinent.

Lady T. But that, you know, Abigail, is a sign he has been used to good company——Then indeed he is very positive.

Ab. Positive! why, he contradicts you in every thing you say.

Lady T. But then, you know, Abigail, he has been educated at the inns of court.

Ab. A blessed education indeed! It has made him forget his catechism!

Lady T. You talk as if you hated him.

Ab. You talk as if you loved him.

Lady T. Hold your tongue; here he comes.

Enter Tinsel.

Tin. My dear widow!

Ab. My dear widow! marry, come up! [*Aside.*

Lady T. Let him alone, Abigail; so long as he does not call me my dear wife, there's no harm done.

Tin. I have been most ridiculously diverted since I left you—Your servants have made a convert of my booby: his head is so filled with this foolish story of a drummer, that I expect the rogue will be afraid hereafter to go upon a message by moon-light.

Lady T. Ay, Mr. Tinsel, what a loss of billet-doux would that be to many a fine lady!

Ab. Then you still believe this to be a foolish story? I thought my lady had told you, that she had heard it herself.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha!

Ab. Why, you would not persuade us out of our senses?

Tin. Ha, ha, ha!

Ab. There's manners for you, Madam. [*Afide.*]

Lady T. Admirably rally'd! that laugh is unanswerable! Now I'll be hanged if you could forbear being witty upon me, if I should tell you I heard it no longer ago than last night!

Tin. Fancy!

Lady T. But what if I should tell you my maid was with me!

Tin. Vapours! Vapours! Pray, my dear widow, will you answer me one question?—Had you ever this noise of a drum in your head, all the while your husband was living?

Lady T. And pray, Mr. Tinsel, will you let me ask you another question? Do you think we can hear in the country, as well as you do in town?

Tin. Believe me, Madam, I could prescribe you a cure for these imaginations.

Ab. Don't tell my lady of imaginations, Sir, I have heard it myself.

Tin. Hark thee, child—art thou not an old maid?

Ab. Sir, if I am, it is my own fault.

Tin. Whims! Freaks! Megrimms! indeed Mrs. Abigail.

Ab. Marry, Sir, by your talk one would believe you thought every thing that was good is a megrim.

Lady T. Why truly I don't very well understand what you meant by your doctrine to me in the garden just now, that every thing we saw was made by chance.

Ab. A very pretty subject indeed for a lover to divert his mistress with.

Lady T. But, I suppose, that was only a taste of the conversation you would entertain me with after marriage.

Tin. Oh, I shall then have time to read you such lectures of motions, atoms, and nature—that you shall learn to think as freely as the best of us, and be convinced in less than a month, that all about us is chance-work.

Lady T. You are a very complaisant person indeed;
and

‘ and so you would make your court to me, by persuading me that I was made by chance !

‘ *Tin.* Ha, ha, ha ! well said, my dear ! why, faith, thou wert a very lucky hit, that’s certain !

‘ *Lady T.* Pray, Mr. Tinsel, where did you learn this odd way of talking ?

‘ *Tin.* Ah, widow, ’tis your country innocence makes you think it an odd way of talking.

Lady T. Though you give no credit to stories of apparitions, I hope you believe there are such things as spirits !

Tin. Simplicity !

Ab. I fancy you don’t believe women have souls ; d’ye, Sir ?

Tin. Foolish enough !

‘ *Lady T.* I vow, Mr. Tinsel, I’m afraid malicious people will say I’m in love with an atheist.

‘ *Tin.* Oh, my dear, that’s an old-fashioned word — I’m a free-thinker, child !

‘ *Ab.* I’m sure you are a free-speaker !

‘ *Lady T.* Really, Mr. Tinsel, considering that you are so fine a gentleman, I’m amazed where you got all this learning ! I wonder it has not spoiled your breeding.

‘ *Tin.* To tell you the truth, I have not time to look into these dry matters myself, but I am convinced by four or five learned men, whom I sometimes overhear at a coffee-house I frequent, that our forefathers were a pack of asses, that the world has been in an error for some thousands of years, and that all the people upon earth, excepting those two or three worthy gentlemen, are imposed upon, cheated, bubbled, abused, bamboozled —

‘ *Ab.* Madam, how can you hear such a profligate ? he talks like the London prodigal.

‘ *Lady T.* Why really, I’m thinking, if there be no such things as spirits, a woman has no occasion for marrying — She need not be afraid to lie by herself.

‘ *Tin.* Ah, my dear ! are husbands good for nothing but to frighten away spirits ? Dost thou think I could not instruct thee in several other comforts of matrimony.

‘ *Lady T.* Ah, but you are a man of so much knowledge, that you would always be laughing at my ignorance — You learned men are so apt to despise one.

Tin. No, child ! I'd teach thee my principles, thou shouldst be as wise as I am—in a week's time.

Lady T. Do you think your principles would make a woman the better wife ?

Tin. Pr'ythee, widow, don't be queer.

Lady T. I love a gay temper, but I would not have you rally things that are serious.

Tin. Well enough, faith ! where's the jest of rallying any thing else ?

Ab. Ah, Madam, did you ever hear Mr. Fantome talk at this rate ? [*Afide.*]

Tin. But where's this ghost ! this son of a whore of a drummer ? I'd fain hear him, methinks.

Ab. Pray, Madam, don't suffer him to give the ghost such ill language, especially when you have reason to believe it is my master.

Tin. That's well enough, faith, Nab ; dost think thy master is so unreasonable, as to continue his claim to his relict after his bones are laid ? Pray, widow, remember the words of your contract, you have fulfilled them to a tittle—Did not you marry Sir George to the tune of *'till death us do part* ?

Lady T. I must not hear Sir George's memory treated in so slight a manner—This fellow must have been at some pains to make himself such a finished coxcomb. [*Afide.*]

Tin. Give me but possession of your person, and I'll whirl you up to town for a winter, and cure you at once. Oh, I have known many a country lady come to London with frightful stories of the hall-house being haunted, of fairies, spirits, and witches ; that by the time she had seen a comedy, played at an assembly, and ambled in a ball or two, has been so little afraid of bugbears, that she has ventured home in a chair at all hours of the night.

Ab. Hum—saucy-box. [*Afide.*]

Tin. 'Tis the solitude of the country that creates these whimsies ; there was never such a thing as a ghost heard of at London, except in the play-house—Oh, we'd pass all our time in London. 'Tis the scene of pleasure and diversions, where there's something to amuse you every hour of the day. Life's not life in the country.

Lady T. Well then, you have an opportunity of showing ing

ing the sincerity of that love to me which you profess. You may give a proof that you have an affection to my person, not my jointure.

Tin. Your jointure! How can you think me such a dog! But, child, won't your jointure be the same thing in London, as in the country?

Lady T. No, you're deceived! You must know it is settled on me by marriage articles, on condition that I live in this old mansion-house, and keep it up in repair.

Tin. How!

M. That's well put, Madam.

Tin. Why faith I have been looking upon this house, and think it is the prettiest habitation I ever saw in my life.

Lady T. Ay, but then this cruel drum!

Tin. Something so venerable in it!

Lady T. Ay, but the drum!

Tin. For my part, I like this Gothic way of building better than any of your new orders—it would be a thousand pities it should fall to ruin.

Lady T. Ay, but the drum!

Tin. How pleasantly we two could pass our time in this delicious situation. Our lives would be a continued dream of happiness. Come, faith, widow, let's go upon the leads, and take a view of the country.

Lady T. Ay, but the drum! the drum!

Tin. My dear, take my word for't 'tis all fancy: besides, should he drum in thy very bed-chamber, I should only hug thee the closer.

Clas'd in the folds of love, I'd meet my doom,

And act my joys though thunder shook the room.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE opens and discovers Vellum in his Office, and a Letter in his Hand.

VELLUM.

THIS letter astonisheth; may I believe my own eyes—or rather my spectacles—To Humphrey Vellum, Esq. steward to the Lady Truman.

“VELLUM.”

" VELLUM,

I doubt not but you will be glad to hear your master is alive and designs to be with you in half an hour. The report of my being slain in the Netherlands, has, I find, produced some disorders in my family. I am now at the George-inn. If an old man with a grey beard, in a black cloak, enquires after you, give him admittance. He passes for a conjurer, but is really

Your faithful friend,
G. TRUMAN.

P. S. Let this be a secret, and you shall find your account in it."

This amazeth me ! and yet the reasons why I should believe he is still living are manifold—First, because this has often been the case of other military adventurers.

Secondly, because this news of his death was first publish'd in Dyer's Letter.

Thirdly, because this letter can be written by none but himself—I know his hand and manner of spelling.

Fourthly——

Enter Butler.

But. Sir, here's a strange old gentleman that asks for you ; he says he's a conjurer, but he looks very suspicious ; I wish he ben't a Jesuit.

Vel. Admit him immediately.

But. I wish he ben't a Jesuit ; but he says he's nothing but a conjurer.

Vel. He says right——He is no more than a conjurer. Bring him in and withdraw. *[Exit Butler.]*

And fourthly, as I was saying, because——

Enter Butler with Sir George.

But. Sir, here is the conjurer---What a devilish long beard he has ! I warrant it has been growing these hundred years. *[Aside. Exit.]*

Sir G. Dear Vellum, you have receiv'd my letter : but before we proceed, lock the door.

Vel. It is his voice. *[Shuts the door.]*

Sir G. In the next place help me off with this cumbersome cloak.

Vel. It is his shape.

Sir G. So ; now lay my beard upon the table.

Vel.

THE DRUMMER. 21

Vel. [After having looked on Sir Geo. thro' his spectacles.] It is his face, every lineament!

Sir G. Well, now I have put off the conjurer and the old man, I can talk to thee more at my ease.

Vel. Believe me, my good master, I am as much rejoiced to see you alive, as I was upon the day you were born. Your name was in all the news-papers in the list of those that were slain.

Sir G. We have not time to be particular. I shall only tell thee, in general, that I was taken prisoner in the battle, and was under close confinement several months. Upon my release, I was resolved to surprise my wife with the news of my being alive. I know, Vellum, you are a person of so much penetration, that I need not use any further arguments to convince you that I am so.

Vel. I am—and, moreover, I question not but your good lady will likewise be convinced of it. Her honour is a discerning lady.

Sir G. I am only afraid she should be convinced of it to her sorrow. Is she not pleased with her imaginary widowhood? Tell me truly, was she afflicted at the report of my death?

Vel. Sorely.

Sir G. How long did her grief last?

Vel. Longer than I have known any widow's—at least three days.

Sir G. Three days, sayst thou? Three whole days! I'm afraid thou flatterest me—Oh, woman, woman!

Vel. Grief is twofold—

Sir G. This blockhead is as methodical as ever—but I know he is honest. [Aside.]

Vel. There is a real grief, and there is a methodical grief: she was drowned in tears till such time as the tailor had made her widow's weeds—Indeed, they became her.

Sir G. Became her! and was that her comfort? Truly, a most seasonable consolation.

Vel. I must needs say she paid a due regard to your memory, and could not forbear weeping when she saw company.

Sir G. That was kind, indeed! I find she grieved with a great

a great deal of good breeding. But how comes this gang of lovers about her?

Vel. Her jointure is considerable.

Sir G. How this fool torments me!

[*Aside.*

Vel. Her person is amiable.

Sir G. Death!

[*Aside.*

Vel. But her character is unblemished. She has been as virtuous in your absence as a Penelope——

Sir G. And has had as many suitors.

Vel. Several have made their overtures.

Sir G. Several!

Vel. But she has rejected all.

Sir G. There thou revivest me. But what means this Tinsel? Are his visits acceptable?

Vel. He is young.

Sir G. Does she listen to him?

Vel. He is gay.

Sir G. Sure she could never entertain a thought of marrying such a coxcomb!

Vel. He is not ill made.

Sir G. Are the vows and protestations that passed between us come to this? I can't bear the thought of it! Is Tinsel the man designed for my worthy successor?

Vel. You do not consider that you have been dead these fourteen months——

Sir G. Was there ever such a dog?

[*Aside.*

Vel. And I have often heard her say, that she must never expect to find a second Sir George Truman—meaning your ho—nour.

Sir G. I think she loved me; but I must search into this story of the drummer, before I discover myself to her. I have put on this habit of a conjurer, in order to introduce myself. It must be your business to recommend me as a most profound person, that, by my great knowledge in the curious arts, can silence the drummer, and dispossess the house.

Vel. I am going to lay my accounts before my Lady; and I will endeavour to prevail upon her ho—nour to admit the trial of your art.

Sir G. I have scarce heard of any of these stories, that did not arise from a love-intrigue. Amours raise as many ghosts as murders.

Vel.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail endeavours to persuade us, that 'tis your ho—nour who troubles the house.

Sir G. That convinces me 'tis a cheat; for I think, Vellum, I may be pretty well assured it is not me.

Vel. I am apt to think so, truly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Abigail had always an ascendant over her lady; and if there is a trick in this matter, depend upon it, she is at the bottom of it. I'll be hanged if this ghost be not one of Abigail's familiars.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail has of late been very mysterious.

Sir G. I fancy, Vellum, thou couldst worm it out of her. I know formerly there was an amour between you.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail hath her allurements; and she knows I have pick'd up a competency in your ho—nour's service.

Sir G. If thou hast, all I ask of thee, in return, is, that thou wouldst immediately renew thy addresses to her. Coax her up. Thou hast such a silver tongue, Vellum, as 'twill be impossible for her to withstand. Besides, she is so very a woman, that she'll like thee the better for giving her the pleasure of telling a secret. In short, wheedle her out of it, and I shall act by the advice which thou givest me.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail was never deaf to me, when I talked upon that subject. I will take an opportunity of addressing myself to her in the most pathetic manner.

Sir G. In the mean time, lock me up in your office, and bring me word what success you have—Well, sure I am the first that ever was employed to lay himself.

Vel. You act, indeed, a threefold part in this house; you are a ghost, a conjurer, and my ho—noured master, Sir George Truman; he, he, he! You will pardon me for being jocular.

Sir G. Oh, Mr. Vellum, with all my heart! You know I love you men of wit and humour. Be as merry as thou pleasest, so thou dost thy business. [*Mimicking him.*] You will remember, Vellum, your commission is twofold, first, to gain admission for me to your lady, and secondly, to get the secret out of Abigail.

Vel. It sufficeth.

[*The Scene shuts.*]

Enter Lady Truman.

Lady T. Women who have been happy in a first marriage, are the most apt to venture upon a second. But, for my part, I had a husband so every way suited to my inclinations,

nations; that I must entirely forget him, before I can like another man. I have now been a widow but fourteen months, and have had twice as many lovers, all of them professed admirers of my person, but passionately in love with my jointure. I think it is a revenge I owe my sex, to make an example of this worthless tribe of fellows, 'who grow impudent, dress themselves fine, and fancy we are obliged to provide for them. But of all my captives, Mr. Tinsel is the most extraordinary in his kind. I hope the diversion I give myself with him is unblameable. I'm sure 'tis necessary to turn my thoughts off from the memory of that dear man, who has been the greatest happiness and affliction of my life. My heart would be a prey to melancholy, if I did not find these innocent methods of relieving it.' But here comes Abigail; I must seize the baggage; for I find she has taken it into her head, that I'm entirely at her disposal.

Enter Abigail.

Ab. Madam, Madam, yonder's Mr. Tinsel has as good as taken possession of your house. Marry, he says, he must have Sir George's apartment enlarged; for, truly, says he, I hate to be straitened. Nay, he was so impudent as to shew me the chamber where he intends to consummate, as he calls it.

Lady T. Well, he's a wild fellow.

Ab. Indeed, he's a very sad man, Madam.

Lady T. He's young, Abigail; 'tis a thousand pities he should be lost; I should be mighty glad to reform him.

Ab. Reform him! marry, hang him!

Lady T. Has he not a great deal of life?

Ab. Ay, enough to make your heart ache.

Lady T. I dare say thou think'st him a very agreeable fellow.

Ab. He thinks himself so, I'll answer for him.

Lady T. He's very good-natured.

Ab. He ought to be so; for he's very silly.

Lady T. Dost thou think he loves me?

Ab. Mr. Fantome did, I'm sure.

Lady T. With what raptures he talk'd!

Ab. Yes; but 'twas in praise of your jointure-house.

Lady T. He has kept bad company.

Ab. They must be very bad, indeed, if they were worse than himself.

Lady T. I have a strong fancy a good woman might reform him.

Ab. It would be a fine experiment, if it should not succeed.

Lady T. Well, Abigail, we'll talk of that another time. Here comes the steward. I have no further occasion for you at present. [Exit Ab.]

Enter Vellum.

Vel. Madam, is your ho-nour at leisure to look into the accounts of the last week? They rise very high. House-keeping is chargeable in a house that is haunted.

Lady T. How comes that to pass? I hope the drum neither eats nor drinks. But read your account, Vellum.

Vel. [Putting on and off his spectacles in this scene.] A hoghead and a half of ale—It is not for the ghost's drinking; but your ho-nour's servants say, they must have something to keep up their courage against this strange noise. They tell me, they expect a double quantity of malt in their small beer, so long as the house continues in this condition.

Lady T. At this rate, they'll take care to be frightened all the year round, I'll answer for them. But go on.

Vel. Item, Two sheep, and a—Where is the ox?—Oh, here I have him—and an ox—Your ho-nour must always have a piece of cold beef in the house, for the entertainment of so many strangers, who come from all parts, to hear this drum. Item, Bread, ten peck loaves—They cannot eat beef without bread. Item, Three barrels of table-beer—They must have drink with their meat.

Lady T. Sure no woman in England has a steward that makes such ingenious comments on his works! [Aside.]

Vel. Item, To Mr. Tinsel's servants five bottles of port wine—It was by your ho-nour's order. Item, Three bottles of sack, for the use of Mrs. Abigail.

Lady T. I suppose that was by your own order.

Vel. We have been long friends; we are your ho-nour's ancient servants. Sack is an innocent cordial, and gives her spirit to chide the servants, when they are tardy in their business; he, he, he! Pardon me, for being jocular.

Lady T. Well, I see you'll come together at last.

C.

Vel.

Vel. Item, A dozen pound of watch-lights, for the use of the servants.

Lady T. For the use of the servants! What, are the rogues afraid of sleeping in the dark! What an unfortunate woman am I! This is such a particular distress, it puts me to my wits end. Vellum, what would you advise me to do?

Vel. Madam, your ho-nour has two points to consider. *Imprimis*, To retrench these extravagant expences, which bring so many strangers upon you—Secondly, To clear the house of this invisible drummer.

Lady T. This learned division leaves me just as wise as I was. But how must we bring these two points to bear?

Vel. I beseech your ho-nour to give me the hearing.

Lady T. I do. But, pr'ythee, take pity on me, and be not tedious.

Vel. I will be concise. There is a certain person arrived this morning, an aged man, of a venerable aspect, and of a long, hoary beard, that reacheth down to his girdle. The common people call him a wizard, a white-witch, a conjurer, a cunning-man, a necromancer, a——

Lady T. No matter for his titles. But what of all this?

Vel. Give me the hearing, good my Lady. He pretends to great skill in the occult sciences, and is come hither upon the rumour of this drum. If one may believe him, he knows the secret of laying ghosts, or of quieting houses that are haunted.

Lady T. Pho! these are idle stories, to amuse the country people: this can do us no good.

Vel. It can do us no harm, my Lady.

Lady T. I dare say, thou dost not believe there is any thing in it thyself.

Vel. I cannot say I do; there is no danger, however, in the experiment. Let him try his skill; if it should succeed, we are rid of the drum; if it should not, we may tell the world that it has, and by that means, at least, get out of this expensive way of living; so that it must turn to your advantage, one way or another.

Lady T. I think you argue very rightly. But where is the man? I would fain see him. He must be a curiosity.

Vel. I have already discoursed him, and he is to be with me,

me, in my office, half an hour hence. He asks nothing for his pains, till he has done his work—No cure, no money.

Lady T. That circumstance, I must confess, would make one believe there is more in his art than one would imagine. Pray, Vellum, go and fetch him hither immediately.

Vel. I am gone. He shall be forth-coming forthwith.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Butler, Coachman, and Gardener.

But. Rare news, my lads! rare news!

Gard. What's the matter? Hast thou got any more vails for us?

But. No, 'tis better than that.

Coach. Is there another stranger come to the house?

But. Ay, such a stranger, as will make all our lives easy.

Gard. What, is he a lord?

But. A lord! No, nothing like it—He's a conjurer.

Coach. A conjurer! What, is he come a wooing to my Lady?

But. No, no, you fool, he's come a purpose to lay the spirit.

Coach. Ay, marry, that's good news indeed. But where is he?

But. He is locked up with the steward in his office. They are laying their heads together very close. I fancy they are casting a figure.

Gard. Pr'ythee, John, what sort of a creature is a conjurer?

But. Why, he's made much as other men are, if it was not for his long grey beard.

Coach. Look ye, Peter, it stands with reason that a conjurer should have a long grey beard; for, did ye ever know a witch that was not an old woman?

Gard. Why, I remember a conjurer, once, at a fair, that, to my thinking, was a very smock-faced man, and yet he spewed out fifty yards of green ferret. I fancy, John, if thou'dst get him into the pantry, and give him a cup of ale, he'd shew us a few tricks. Dost think we could not persuade him to swallow one of thy case-knives, for his diversion? He'll certainly bring it up again.

But. Peter, thou art such a wise-acre!—Thou dost not know the difference between a conjurer and a juggler.

This man must be a very great master of his trade. His beard is at least half a yard long; he's dressed in a strange dark cloak, as black as a coal. Your conjurer always goes in mourning.

Gard. Is he a gentleman? Had he a sword by his side?

But. No, no, he's too grave a man for that; a conjurer is as grave as a judge. But he had a long white wand in his hand.

Coach. You may be sure there's a good deal of virtue in that wand—I fancy 'tis made out of witch-elm.

Gard. I warrant you, if the ghost appears, he'll whisk ye that wand before his eyes, and strike you the drum-stick out of his hand.

But. No, the wand, look ye, is to make a circle, and if he once gets the ghost in a circle, then he has him; let him get out again, if he can. A circle, you must know, is a conjurer's trap.

Coach. But what will he do with him, when he has him there?

But. Why, then he'll overpower him with his learning.

Gard. If he can once compass him, and get him in Job's-pound, he'll make nothing of him, but speak a few hard words to him, and, perhaps, bind him over to his good behaviour, for a thousand years.

Coach. Ay, ay, he'll send him packing to his grave again, with a flea in his ear, I warrant him.

But. No, no, I would advise Madam to spare no cost. If the conjurer be but well paid, he'll take pains upon the ghost, and lay him, look ye, in the Red Sea—and then he's laid for ever.

Coach. Ay, marry, that would spoil his drum for him.

Gard. Why, John, there must be a power of spirits in that same Red Sea—I warrant ye, they are as plenty as fish.

Coach. Well, I wish, after all, that he may not be too hard for the conjurer. I'm afraid he'll find a tough bit of work on't.

Gard. I wish the spirit may not carry a corner of the house off with him.

But. As for that, Peter, you may be sure that the steward has made his bargain with the cunning-man beforehand, that he shall stand to all costs and damages—

But,

THE DRUMMER.

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But, hark! yonder's Mrs. Abigail; we shall have her with us immediately, if we do not get off.

Gard. Ay, lads, if we could get Mrs. Abigail well laid too, we should lead merry lives.

For, to a man, like me, that's stout and bold,

A ghost is not so dreadful as a scold. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE opens, and discovers Sir George in Vellum's Office.

SIR GEORGE.

I Wonder I don't hear of Vellum yet. But I know his wisdom will do nothing rashly. The fellow has been so used to form in business, that it has infected his whole conversation. But I must not find fault with that punctual and exact behaviour which has been of so much use to me; my estate is the better for it.

Enter Vellum.

Well, Vellum, I'm impatient to hear your success.

Vel. First, let me lock the door.

Sir G. Will your lady admit me?

Vel. If this lock is not mended soon, it will be quite spoiled.

Sir G. Pr'ythee, let the lock alone at present, and answer me.

Vel. Delays in business are dangerous—I must send for the smith next week; and, in the mean time, will take a minute of it.

Sir G. But what says your lady?

Vel. This pen is naught, and wants mending—My Lady, did you say?

Sir G. Does she admit me?

Vel. I have gained admission for you as a conjurer.

Sir G. That's enough—I'll gain admission for myself, as a husband. Does she believe there's any thing in my art?

Vel. It is hard to know what a woman believes.

Sir G. Did she ask no questions about me?

Vel. Sundry—She desires to talk with you herself, before you enter upon your business.

Sir G. But when?

Vel. Immediately——this instant.

Sir G. Pugh! what hast thou been doing all this while? Why didst not tell me so? Give me my cloak—Have you yet met with Abigail?

Vel. I have not yet had an opportunity of talking with her; but we have interchanged some languishing glances.

Sir G. Let thee alone for that, Vellum. I have formerly seen thee ogle her through thy spectacles. Well, this is a most venerable cloak. After the business of this day is over, I'll make thee a present of it. 'Twill become thee mightily.

Vel. He, he, he! Would you make a conjurer of your steward?

Sir G. Pr'ythee, don't be jocular; I'm in haste. Help me on with my beard.

Vel. And what will your ho—nour do with your cast beard?

Sir G. Why, faith, thy gravity wants only such a beard to it. If thou would'st wear it with the cloak, thou would'st make a most complete heathen philosopher. But, where's my wand?

Vel. A fine taper stick—It is well chosen. I will keep this till you are sheriff of the county. It is not my custom to let any thing be lost.

Sir G. Come, Vellum, lead the way. You must introduce me to your Lady. Thou art the fittest fellow in the world to be master of the ceremonies to a conjurer.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Abigail, crossing the stage. Tinsel following.

Tin. Nabby, Nabby, whither so fast, child?

Ab. Keep your hands to yourself. I'm going to call the steward to my Lady.

Tin. What, Goodman Twofold? I met him walking with a strange old fellow, yonder. I suppose he belongs to the family too. He looks very antique. He must be some of the furniture of this old mansion-house.

Ab. What does the man mean? Don't think to palm me, as you do my Lady.

Tin. Pr'ythee, Nabby, tell me one thing—What's the reason thou art my enemy?

Ab. Marry, because I'm a friend to my Lady.

Tin. Dost thou see any thing about me thou dost not like?

like? Come hither, hussy. Give me a kiss. Don't be ill-natured.

Ab. Sir, I know how to be civil, [*Kisses her.*] This rogue will carry off my Lady, if I don't take care. [*Aside.*

Tin. Thy lips are as soft as velvet, Abigail. I must get thee a husband.

Ab. Ay, now you don't speak idly, I can talk to you.

Tin. I have one in my eye for thee. Dost thou love a young lusty son of a whore?

Ab. Lud, how you talk!

Tin. This is a thundering dog.

Ab. What is he?

Tin. A private gentleman.

Ab. Ay! Where does he live?

Tin. In the Horse-guards—But he has one fault I must tell thee of; if thou canst bear with that, he's a man for thy purpose.

Ab. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, what may that be?

Tin. He's but five-and-twenty years old.

Ab. 'Tis no matter for his age, if he has been well educated.

Tin. No man better, child; he'll tie a wig, toss a die, make a pass, and swear with such a grace, as would make thy heart leap to hear him.

Ab. Half these accomplishments will do, provided he has an estate—Pray, what has he?

Tin. Not a farthing.

Ab. Pox on him! what do I give him the hearing for? [*Aside.*

Tin. But as for that, I would make it up to him.

Ab. How?

Tin. Why, look ye, child, as soon as I have married thy Lady, I design to discard this old prig of a steward, and to put this honest gentleman, I am speaking of, into his place.

Ab. [*Aside.*] This fellow's a fool—I'll have no more to say to him—Hark! my Lady's a coming.

Tin. Depend upon it, Nab, I'll remember my promise.

Ab. Ay, and so will I too, to your cost. [*Aside.*

[*Exit Abigail.*

Tin.

Tin. My dear is purely fitted up with a maid—But I shall rid the house of her.

Enter Lady Truman.

Lady T. Oh, Mr. Tinsel, I am glad to meet you here! I am going to give you an entertainment that won't be disagreeable to a man of wit and pleasure of the town—There may be something diverting in a conversation between a conjurer, and this conceited ass. [*Aside.*]

Tin. She loves me to distraction, I see that. [*Aside.*]—Pr'ythee, Widow, explain thyself.

Lady T. You must know, here is a strange sort of a man come to town, who undertakes to free the house from this disturbance. The steward believes him a conjurer.

Tin. Ay, thy steward is a deep one.

Lady T. He's to be here immediately. It is, indeed, an odd figure of a man.

Tin. Oh, I warrant you, he has studied the black art! Ha, ha, ha! Is he not an Oxford scholar?—Widow, thy house is the most extraordinarily inhabited of any widow's this day in Christendom. I think thy four chief domestics are, a withered Abigail, a superannuated steward, a ghost, and a conjurer.

Lady T. [*Mimicking Tinsel.*] And you would have it inhabited by a fifth, who is a more extraordinary person than any of all these four.

Tin. 'Tis a sure sign a woman loves you, when she imitates your manner. [*Aside.*] Thou'rt very smart, my dear. But see, smoke the doctor!

Enter Vellum and Sir George, in his conjurer's habit.

Vel. I will introduce this profound person to your ladyship, and then leave him with you—Sir, this is her honour.

Sir G. I know it well.

[*Exit Vellum.*]

[*Aside, walking in a musing posture.*] That dear woman! The sight of her unmans me. I could weep for tenderness, did not I, at the same time, feel an indignation rise in me to see that wretch with her. And yet, I cannot but smile to see her in the company of her first and second husband at the same time.

Lady T. Mr. Tinsel, do you speak to him; you are used to the company of men of learning.

Tin. Old gentleman, thou dost not look like an inhabitant

bitant of this world ; I suppose thou art lately come down from the stars. Pray, what news is stirring in the Zodiac ?

Sir G. News that ought to make the heart of a coward tremble. Mars is now entering into the first house, and will shortly appear in all his domal dignities——

Tin. Mars ! Pr'ythee, father Grey-beard, explain thyself.

Sir G. The entrance of Mars into his house, portends the entrance of a master into this family——and that soon.

Tin. D'ye hear that, widow ? The stars have cut me out for thy husband. This house is to have a master; and that soon——Hark thee, old Gadbury ? Is not Mars very like a young fellow called Tom Tinsel ?

Sir G. Not so much as Venus is like this lady.

Tin. A word in your ear, doctor ; these two planets will be in conjunction by and by ; I can tell you that.

Sir G. [*Aside, walking disturbed.*] Curse on this impertinent fop ! I shall scarce forbear discovering myself——Madam, I am told that your house is visited with strange noises.

Lady T. And I am told that you can quiet them. I must confess I had a curiosity to see the person I had heard so much of ; and, indeed, your aspect shews that you have had much experience in the world. You must be a very aged man.

Sir G. My aspect deceives you : what do you think is my real age ?

Tin. I should guess thee within three years of Methusalem. Pr'ythee tell me, wast not thou born before the flood ?

Lady T. Truly I should guess you to be in your second or third century, ' I warrant you, you have great grandchildren with beards a foot long.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha ! If there be truth in man, I was but five and thirty last August. Oh, the study of the occult sciences makes a man's beard grow faster than you would imagine.

Lady T. What an escape you have had, Mr. Tinsel, that you were not bred a scholar !

Tin.

Tin. And so I fancy, Doctor, thou thinkest me an illiterate fellow, because I have a smooth chin?

Sir G. Hark ye, Sir, a word in your ear. You are a toxcomb, by all the rules of physiognomy; but let that be a secret between you and me. [*Aside to Tinsel.*]

Lady T. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, what is it the doctor whispers?

Tin. Only a compliment, child, upon two or three of my features. It does not become me to repeat it.

Lady T. Pray, Doctor, examine this gentleman's face, and tell me his fortune.

Sir G. If I may believe the lines of his face, he likes it better than I do, or—than you do, fair Lady.

Tin. Widow, I hope now thou'rt convinced he's a cheat.

Lady T. For my part, I believe he's a witch—Go on, Doctor.

Sir G. He will be crossed in love; and that soon.

Tin. Pr'ythee, Doctor, tell us the truth. Dost not thou live in Moor-fields?

Sir G. Take my word for it, thou shalt never live in my Lady Truman's mansion-house.

Tin. Pray, old gentleman, hast thou never been plucked by the beard when thou wert saucy?

Lady T. Nay, Mr. Tinsel, you are angry! do you think I would marry a man that dares not have his fortune told?

Sir G. Let him be angry—I matter not—He is but short-lived. He will soon die of—

Tin. Come, come, speak out, old Hocus, he, he, he! This fellow makes me burst with laughing.

[*Forces a laugh.*]

Sir G. He will soon die of a fright—or of the—let me see your nose—Ay—'tis so!

Tin. You son of a whore! I'll run ye thro' the body. I never yet made the sun shine thro' a conjurer—

Lady T. Oh, fy, Mr. Tinsel! you will not kill an old man?

Tin. An old man! The dog says he's but five and thirty.

Lady T. Oh, fy; Mr. Tinsel, I did not think you could have been so passionate, I hate a passionate man. Put up your sword, or I must never see you again.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha! I was but in jest, my dear. I had a mind

mind to have made an experiment upon the Doctor's body. I would but have drilled a little eyelet hole in it, and have seen whether he had art enough to close it up again.

Sir G. Courage is but ill shown before a lady. But know, if ever I meet thee again, thou shalt find this arm can wield other weapons besides this wand.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady T. Well, learned Sir, you are to give a proof of your art, not of your courage. Or if you will show your courage, let it be at nine o'clock—for that is the time the noise is generally heard.

Tin. And look ye, old gentleman, if thou dost not do thy business well, I can tell thee by the little skill I have, that thou wilt be tossed in a blanket before ten. We'll do our endeavour to send thee back to the stars again.

Sir G. I'll go and prepare myself for the ceremonies—And, Lady, as you expect they should succeed to your wishes, treat that fellow with the contempt he deserves.

[*Exit Sir George.*]

Tin. The fauciest dog I ever talked with in my whole life!

Lady T. Methinks he's a diverting fellow; one may see he's no fool.

Tin. No fool! Ay, but thou dost not take him for a conjurer.

Lady T. Truly I don't know what to take him for; I am resolved to employ him however. When a sickness is desperate, we often try remedies that we have no great faith in.

Enter Abigail.

Ab. Madam, the tea is ready in the parlour as you ordered.

Lady T. Come, Mr. Tinsel, we may there talk of the subject more at leisure. [*Exeunt Lady T. and Tinsel.*]

Abigail sola.

Sure never any lady had such servants as mine has! Well, if I get this thousand pounds, I hope to have some of my own. Let me see, I'll have a pretty tight girl—just such as I was ten years ago (I'm afraid I may say twenty) she shall dress me and flatter me—for I will be flattered, that's pos! My Lady's cast suits will serve her
after

after I have given them the wearing. Besides, when I am worth a thousand pound, I shall certainly carry off the steward—Madam Vellum—how prettily that will sound ! Here, bring out Madam Vellum's chaise—Nay, I do not know but it may be a chariot—It will break the attorney's wife's heart—for I shall take place of every body in the parish but my Lady. If I have a son, he shall be called Fantome. But see, Mr. Vellum, as I could wish. I know his humour, and will do my utmost to gain his heart.

Enter Vellum, with a pint of sack.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail, don't I break in upon you unseasonably !

Ab. Oh, no, Mr. Vellum, your visits are always seasonable !

Vel. I have brought with me a taste of fresh canary, which I think is delicious.

Ab. Pray set it down—I have a dram-glass just by—*[Brings in a rummer.]* I'll pledge you ; my Lady's good health.

Vel. And your own with it—sweet Mrs. Abigail.

Ab. Pray, good Mr. Vellum, buy me a little parcel of this sack, and put it under the article of tea—I would not have my name appear to it.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail, your name seldom appears in my bills—and yet—if you will allow me a merry expression—You have been always in my books, Mrs. Abigail. Ha, ha, ha !

Ab. Ha, ha, ha ! Mr. Vellum, you are such dry jesting man !

Vel. Why, truly Mrs. Abigail, I have been looking over my papers—and I find you have been a long time my debtor.

Ab. Your debtor ! For what, Mr. Vellum !

Vel. For my heart, Mrs. Abigail—And our accounts will not be balanced between us till I have yours in exchange for it. Ha, ha, ha.

Ab. Ha, ha, ha ! You are the most gallant dun, Mr. Vellum.

Vel. But I am not used to be paid by words only, Mrs. Abigail ; when will you be out of my debt ?

Ab.

Ab. Oh, Mr. Vellum, you make one blush—My humble service to you.

Vel. I must answer you, Mrs. Abigail, in the country phrase.—Your love is sufficient. Ha, ha, ha!

Ab. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I must own I love a merry man!

Vel. Let me see how long is it, Mrs. Abigail, since I first broke my mind to you—‘It was, I think, *undecimo Gulielmi?*’—We have conversed together these fifteen years—and yet, Mrs. Abigail, I must drink to our better acquaintance. He, he, he—Mrs. Abigail, you know I am naturally jocular.

Ab. Ah! you men love to make sport with us silly creatures.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail, I have a trifle about me, which I would willingly make you a present of. It is indeed but a little toy.

Ab. You are always exceedingly obliging.

Vel. It is but a little toy—scarce worth your acceptance.

Ab. Pray don’t keep me in suspense; what is it, Mr. Vellum?

Vel. A silver thimble.

Ab. I always said Mr. Vellum was a generous lover.

Vel. But I must put it on myself, Mrs. Abigail—You have the prettiest tip of a finger—I must take the freedom to salute it.

Ab. Oh, fy! you make me ashamed, Mr. Vellum; how can you do so? I protest I am in such a confusion—

[*A feigned struggle.*]

Vel. This finger is not the finger of idleness; it bears the honourable scars of the needle—But why are you so cruel as not to pare your nails?

Ab. Oh, I vow you press it so hard! pray give me my finger again.

Vel. This middle finger, Mrs. Abigail, has a pretty neighbour—A wedding ring would become it mightily—He, he, he.

Ab. You’re so full of your jokes. Ay, but where must I find one for’t.

Vel. I design this thimble only as the forerunner of it, they will set off each other, and are—indeed a

twofold emblem. The first will put you in mind of being a good housewife, and the other of being a good wife. Ha, ha, ha!

Ab. Yes, yes, I see you laugh at me.

Vel. Indeed I am serious.

Ab. I thought you had quite forsaken me—I am sure you cannot forget the many repeated vows and promises you formerly made me.

Vel. I should as soon forget the multiplication table.

Ab. I have always taken your part before my Lady.

Vel. You have so, and I have *itemed* it in my memory.

Ab. For I have always looked upon your interest as my own.

Vel. It is nothing but your cruelty can hinder them from being so.

Ab. I must strike while the iron's hot. [*Aside*]—Well, Mr. Vellum, there is no refusing you, you have such a bewitching tongue!

Vel. How? Speak that again!

Ab. Why then, in plain English, I love you.

Vel. I am overjoy'd!

Ab. I must own my passion for you.

Vel. I'm transported! [*Catching her in his arms.*]

Ab. Dear charming man!

Vel. Thou sum total of all my happiness! I shall grow extravagant! I can't forbear!—to drink thy virtuous inclinations in a bumper of sack. Your Lady must make haste, my duck, or we shall provide a young steward to the estate, before she has an heir to it—pr'ythee, my dear, does she intend to marry Mr. Tinsel.

Ab. Marry him! my love. No, no! we must take care of that! there would be no staying in the house for us if she did. That young rake-hell would send all the old servants a grazing. You and I should be discarded before the honey-moon was at an end.

Vel. Pr'ythee, sweet one, does not this drum put the thoughts of marriage out of her head?

Ab. This drum, my dear, if it be well managed, will be no less than a thousand pounds in our way.

Vel. Ay, say'st thou so, my turtle?

Ab. Since we are now as good as man and wife—I mean, almost as good as man and wife—I ought to conceal nothing from you.

Vel.

Vel. Certainly, my dove, not from thy yoke-fellow, thy help mate, thy own flesh and blood!

Ab. Hush! I hear Mr. Tinsel's laugh; my Lady and he are a coming this way; if you will take a turn without, I'll tell you the whole contrivance.

Vel. Give me your hand, chicken.

Ab. Here take it, you have my heart already.

Vel. We shall have much issue.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

Enter Vellum and Butler.

VELLUM.

JOHN, I have certain orders to give you—and therefore be attentive.

But. Attentive! Ay, let me alone for that—I suppose he means being sober. [Aside.]

Vel. You know I have always recommended to you a method in your business; I would have your knives and forks, your spoons and napkins, your plate and glasses laid in a method.

But. Ah, master Vellum! you are such a sweet-spoken man, it does one's heart good to receive your orders.

Vel. Method, John, makes business easy; it banishes all perplexity and confusion out of families.

But. How he talks! I could hear him all day.

Vel. And now, John, let me know whether your table-linen, your side-board, your cellar, and every thing else within your province, are properly and methodically disposed for an entertainment this evening.

But. Master Vellum, they shall be ready at a quarter of an hour's warning. But pray, Sir, is this entertainment to be made for the conjurer?

Vel. It is, John, for the conjurer, and yet it is not for the conjurer.

But. Why, look you, Master Vellum, if it is for the conjurer, the cook-maid should have orders to get him some dishes to his palate. Perhaps he may like a little brimstone in his sauce.

Vel. This conjurer, John, is a complicated creature, an amphibious animal, a person of a twofold nature—But he eats and drinks like other men.

But. Marry, master Vellum, he should eat and drink as much as two other men, by the account you give of him.

Vel. Thy conceit is not amiss, he is indeed a double man; ha, ha, ha!

But. Ha! I understand you; he's one of your hermaphrodites, as they call them.

Vel. He is married, and he is not married—He hath a beard, and he hath no beard. He is old, and he is young.

But. How charmingly he talks! I fancy, master Vellum, you could make a riddle. The same man old and young! How do you make that out, master Vellum?

Vel. Thou hast heard of a snake casting his skin, and recovering his youth. Such is this sage person.

But. Nay, 'tis no wonder a conjurer should be like a serpent.

Vel. When he has thrown aside the old conjurer's slough that hangs about him, he'll come out as fine a young gentleman as ever was seen in this house.

But. Does he intend to sup in his slough?

Vel. That time will show.

But. Well, I have not a head for these things. Indeed, Mr. Vellum, I have not understood one word you have said this half hour.

Vel. I did not intend thou shouldst—But to our business—Let there be a table spread in the great hall. Let your pots and glasses be washed, and in a readiness. Bid the cook provide a plentiful supper, and see that all the servants be in their best liveries.

But. Ay, now I understand every word you say. But I would rather hear you talk a little in that t'other way.

Vel. I shall explain to thee what I have said by and by—Bid Susan lay two pillows upon your lady's bed.

But. Two pillows! Madam won't sleep upon them both! She is not a double woman too?

Vel. She will sleep upon neither. But hark, Mrs. Abigail, I think I hear her chiding the cook-maid.

But. Then I'll away, or it will be my turn next: she, I am sure, speaks plain English, one may easily understand every word she says.

[Exit Butler.
Vellum

Vellum solus.

Servants are good for nothing, unless they have an opinion of the person's understanding who has the direction of them.—But see, Mrs. Abigail! she has a bewitching countenance; I wish I may not be tempted to marry her in good earnest.

Enter Abigail.

Ab. Ha! Mr. Vellum.

Vel. What brings my sweet one hither?

Ab. I am coming to speak to my friend behind the wainscot. It is fit, child, he should have an account of this conjurer, that he may not be surprized.

Vel. That would be as much as thy thousand pounds is worth.

Ab. I'll speak low——Walls have ears.

[Pointing at the wainscot.]

Vel. But hark you, duckling! be sure you do not tell him that I am let into the secret.

Ab. That's a good one indeed! as if I should ever tell what passes between you and me.

Vel. No, no, my child, that must not be! he, he, he! that must not be; he, hé, he!

Ab. You will always be waggish.

Vel. Adieu, and let me hear the result of your conference.

Ab. How can you leave one so soon? I shall think it an age 'till I see you again.

Vel. Adieu, my pretty one.

Ab. Adieu, sweet Mr. Vellum.

Vel. My pretty one—— *[As he is going off.]*

Ab. Dear Mr. Vellum.

Vel. My pretty one! *[Exit Vellum.]*

Ab. *[Sola.]* I have him—If I can but get this thousand pounds.

[Fant. gives three raps upon his drum behind the wainscot.]

Ab. Ha. Three raps upon the drum! the signal Mr. Fantome and I agreed upon, when he had a mind to speak with me. *[Fantome raps again.]*

Ab. Very well, I hear you: come, fox, come out of your hole.

SCENE opens, and Fantome comes out.

Ab. You may leave your drum in the wardrobe, 'till you have occasion for it.

Fan. Well, Mrs. Abigail, I want to hear what's doing in the world.

Ab. You are a very inquisitive spirit. But I must tell you, if you do not take care of yourself, you will be laid this evening.

Fan. I have overheard something of that matter. But let me alone for the doctor—I'll engage to give a good account of him. I am more in pain about Tinsel. When a lady's in the case, I'm more afraid of one fop than twenty conjurers.

Ab. To tell you truly, he presses his attacks with so much impudence, that he has made more progress with my Lady in two days, than you did in two months.

Fan. I shall attack her in another manner, if thou canst but procure me another interview. There's nothing makes a lover so keen, as being kept up in the dark.

Ab. Pray, no more of your distant bows, your respectful compliments—Really, Mr. Fantome, you're only fit to make love across a tea-table.

Fan. My dear girl, I can't forbear hugging thee for thy good advice.

Ab. Ay, now I have some hopes of you; but why don't you do so to my Lady?

Fan. Child, I always thought your Lady loved to be treated with respect.

Ab. Believe me, Mr. Fantome, there is not so great a difference between woman and woman, as you imagine. You see Tinsel has nothing but his sauciness to recommend him.

Fan. Tinsel is too great a coxcomb to be capable of love—And let me tell thee, Abigail, a man, who is sincere in his passion, makes but a very awkward profession of it—But I'll mend my manners.

Ab. Ay, or you'll never gain a widow—Come, I must tutee you a little; suppose me to be my Lady, and let me see how you'll behave yourself.

Fan. I'm afraid, child, we han't time for such a piece of mummery.

Ab.

Ab. Oh, it will be quickly over, if you play your part well.

Fan. Why then, dear Mrs. Ab.—I mean, my Lady Truman.

Ab. Ay, but you han't saluted me.

Fan. That's right; faith, I forgot that circumstance.
[*Kisses her.*] Nectar and Ambrosia!

Ab. That's very well——

Fan. How long must I be condemned to languish! when shall my sufferings have an end! My life, my happiness, my all is wound up in you——

Ab. Well! why don't you squeeze my hand.

Fan. What, thus?

Ab. Thus? Ay—Now throw your arm about my middle: hug me closer.——You are not afraid of hurting me! Now pour forth a volley of rapture and nonsense till you are out of breath.

Fan. Transport and ecstacy! where am I!—my life, my bliss!—I rage, I burn, I bleed, I die.

Ab. Go on, go on.

Fan. Flames and darts——Bear me to the gloomy shade, rocks, and grottoes——Flowers, zephyrs, and purling streams.

Ab. Oh, Mr. Fantome, you have a tongue would undo a vestal! You were born for the ruin of our sex.

Fan. This will do then, Abigail?

Ab. Ay, this is talking like a lover, though I only represent my Lady, I take pleasure in hearing you. Well, o'my conscience, when a man of sense has a little dash of the coxcomb in him, no woman can resist him. Go on at this rate, and the thousand pounds is as good as in my pocket.

Fan. I shall think it an age till I have an opportunity of putting this lesson in practice.

Ab. You may do it soon, if you make good use of your time. Mr. Tinsel will be here with my Lady at eight, and at nine the conjurer is to take you in hand.

Fan. Let me alone with both of them.

Ab. Well! forewarn'd, forearm'd. Get into your box, and I'll endeavour to dispose every thing in your favour.

[*Fantome goes in.* *Exit* Abigail.

Enter

Enter Vellum.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail is withdrawn.—I was in hopes to have heard what passed between her and her invisible correspondent.

Enter Tinsel.

Tin. Vellum! Vellum!

Vel. [*Afide.*] Vellum! We are, methinks, very familiar; I am not used to be called so by any but their honours—What would you, Mr. Tinsel?

Tin. Let me beg a favour of thee, old gentleman.

Vel. What is that, good Sir?

Tin. Pr'ythee run and fetch me the rent-roll of thy Lady's estate.

Vel. The rent-roll!

Tin. The rent-roll! Ay, the rent-roll! Dost not understand what that means?

Vel. Why, have you thoughts of purchasing of it?

Tin. Thou hast hit it, old boy; that is my very intention.

Vel. The purchase will be considerable.

Tin. And for that reason I have bid thy Lady very high—She is to have no less for it than this entire person of mine.

Vel. Is your whole estate personal, Mr. Tinsel—he, he, he!

Tin. Why, your queer old dog, you don't pretend to jest, d'ye? Look ye, Vellum, if you think of being continued my steward, you must learn to walk with your toes out.

Vel. [*Afide.*] An insolent companion!

Tin. Thou'rt confounded rich, I see, by that dangling of thy arms.

Vel. [*Afide.*] An ungracious bird!

Tin. Thou shalt lend me a couple of thousand pounds.

Vel. [*Afide.*] A very profligate!

Tin. Look ye, Vellum, I intend to be kind to you—I'll borrow some money of you.

Vel. I cannot but smile to consider the disappointment this young fellow will meet with; I will make myself merry with him. [*Afide.*] And so, Mr. Tinsel, you promise you will be a very kind master to me.

[*Stifling a laugh.*

Tin.

Tin. What will you give for a life in the house you live in?

Vel. What do you think of five hundred pounds?—
Ha, ha, ha!

Tin. That's too little.

Vel. And yet it is more than I shall give you—And I will offer you two reasons for it.

Tin. Pr'ythee, what are they?

Vel. First, because the tenement is not in your disposal; and, secondly, because it never will be in your disposal, and so fare you well, good Mr. Tinsel. Ha, ha, ha! You will pardon me for being jocular.

[*Exit Vellum.*]

Tin. This rogue is as saucy as the conjurer: I'll be hanged if they are not a-kin.

Enter Lady.

Lady T. Mr. Tinsel! what, all alone? You free-thinkers are great admirers of solitude.

Tin. No, faith, I have been talking with thy steward, a very grotesque figure of a fellow, 'the very picture of one of our benchers.' How can you bear his conversation?

Lady T. I keep him for my steward, and not my companion. He's a sober man.

Tin. Yes, yes, he looks like a put, a queer old dog, as ever I saw in my life: we must turn him off, widow. He cheats thee confoundedly, I see that.

Lady T. Indeed you're mistaken; he has always had the reputation of being a very honest man.

Tin. What! I suppose he goes to church.

Lady T. Goes to church! so do you too, I hope.

Tin. I would for once, widow, to make sure of you.

Lady T. Ah, Mr. Tinsel! a husband who would not continue to go thither, would quickly forget the promises he made there.

Tin. Faith, very innocent, and very ridiculous! Well then, I warrant thee, widow, thou wouldst not for the world marry a sabbath-breaker!

Lady T. Truly they generally come to a bad end. I remember the conjurer told you, you were short-liv'd.

Tin. The conjurer! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady T. Indeed, you're very witty?

Tin.

Tin. Indeed you're very handsome.' [*Kisses her hand.*

Lady T. I wish the fool does not love me.' [*Aside.*

Tin. Thou art the idol I adore: here must I pay my devotion—Pr'ythee, widow, hast thou any timber upon thy estate.

Lady T. The most impudent fellow I ever met with.

[*Aside.*

Tin. I take notice thou hast a great deal of old plate here in the house, widow.

Lady T. Mr. Tinsel, you are a very observing man.

Tin. Thy large silver cistern would make a very good coach: and half a dozen salvers that I saw on the side-board, might be turned into six as pretty horses as any that appear in the ring.

Lady T. You have a very good fancy, Mr. Tinsel.—What pretty transformations you could make in my house—But I'll see where 'twill end.

[*Aside.*

Tin. Then I observe, child, you have two or three services of gilt plate; we'd eat always in china, my dear.

Lady T. I perceive you are an excellent manager—How quickly you have taken an inventory of my goods!

Tin. Now, hark ye, widow, to shew you the love that I have for you—

Lady T. Very well; let me hear.

Tin. You have an old-fashioned gold caudle cup, with a figure of a saint upon the lid on't.

Lady T. I have: what then?

Tin. Why, look ye, I'd sell the caudle-cup with the old saint for as much money as they'd fetch, which I would convert into a diamond buckle, and make you a present of it.

Lady T. Oh, you are generous to an extravagance. But, pray, Mr. Tinsel, don't dispose of my goods before you are sure of my person. I find you have taken a great affection to my moveables.

Tin. My dear, I love every thing that belongs to you.

Lady T. I see you do, Sir; you need not make any protestations upon that subject.

Tin. Pho, pho, my dear, we are growing serious; and let me tell you that's the very next step to being dull.

'Come, that pretty face was never made to look grave with.'

Lady

Lady T. Believe me, Sir, whatever you think, marriage is a serious subject.

Tin. For that very reason, my dear, let us run over it as fast as we can.

Lady T. I should be very much in haste for a husband, if I married within fourteen months after Sir George's decease.

Tin. Pray, my dear, let me ask you a question: dost not thou think that Sir George is as dead at present to all intents and purposes, as he will be a twelve-month hence?

Lady T. Yes; but decency, Mr. Tinsel.—

Tin. Or dost thou think thou'lt be more a widow then, than thou art now?

Lady T. The world would say I never loved my first husband.

Tin. Ah, my dear, they would say you loved your second; and they would own I deserved it, for I shall love thee most inordinately.

Lady T. But what would people think?

Tin. Think! why they would think thee the mirror of widowhood—That a woman should live fourteen whole months after the decease of her spouse, without having engaged herself. Why, about town, we know many a woman of quality's second husband, several years before the death of the first.

Lady T. Ay, I know you wits have your common-place jests upon us poor widows.

Tin. I'll tell you a story, widow: I know a certain lady, who, considering the craziness of her husband, had, in case of mortality, engaged herself to two young fellows of my acquaintance. They grew such desperate rivals for her, while her husband was alive, that one of them pinked the other in a duel. But the good lady was no sooner a widow, but what did my dowager do? Why, faith, being a woman of honour, she married a third, to whom, it seems, she had given her first promise.

Lady T. And this is a true story upon your own knowledge?

Tin. Every tittle, as I hope to be married, or never believe Tom Tinsel.

Lady

Lady T. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, do you call this talking like a wit, or like a rake?

Tin. Innocent enough, He, he, ho! Why, where's the difference, my dear.

Lady T. Yes, Mr. Tinsel, the only man I ever loved in my life, had a great deal of the one, and nothing of the other in him.

Tin. Nay, now you grow vapourish; thou'lt begin to fancy thou hearest the drum by and by.

Lady T. If you had been here last night about this time, you would not have been so merry.

Tin. About this time, say'st thou! Come, faith, for humour's sake, we'll sit down and listen.

Lady T. I will, if you'll promise to be serious.

Tin. Serious! never fear me, child; ha, ha, ha! Dost not hear him?

Lady T. You break your word already. 'Pray, Mr. Tinsel, do you laugh to shew your wit, or your teeth?

Tin. Why both, my dear——I'm glad, however, that she has taken notice of my teeth. [*Aside.*] But you look serious, child; I fancy thou hearest the drum, dost not?

Lady T. Don't talk so rashly.

Tin. Why, my dear, you could not look more frightened if you had Lucifer's drum-major in your house.

Lady T. Mr. Tinsel, I must desire to see you no more in it, if you do not leave this idle way of talking.

Tin. Child, I thought I had told you what is my opinion of spirits, as we were drinking a dish of tea but just now——There is no such thing, I give thee my word.

Lady T. Oh, My Tinsel, your authority must be of great weight to those that know you.

Tin. For my part, child, I have made myself easy in those points.

Lady T. Sure nothing was ever like this fellow's vanity, but his ignorance. [*Aside.*]

Tin. I'll tell thee what now, widow——I would engage, by the help of a white sheet, and a penny-worth of link, in a dark night, to frighten you a whole country village out of their senses, and the vicar into the bargain. [*Drum beats.*] Hark, hark! what

THE DRUMMER

what noise is that? Heaven defend us! this is more than fancy.

Lady T. It beats more terrible than ever.

Tin. 'Tis very dreadful! What a dog have I been, to speak against my conscience only to shew my parts!

Lady. It comes nearer and nearer. I wish you have not angered it by your foolish discourse.

Tin. Indeed, Madam, I did not speak from my heart. I hope it will do me no hurt, for a little harmless raillery.

Lady T. Harmless, d'ye call it? It beats hard by us, as if it would break through the wall.

Tin. What a devil had I to do with a white sheet?

[Scene opens, and discovers Fantome.]

Mercy on us, it appears!

Lady T. Oh, 'tis he! 'tis he himself! 'tis Sir George! 'tis my husband!

[She faints.]

Tin. Now would I give ten thousand pounds that I were in town. *[Fantome advances to him, drumming.]* I beg ten thousand pardons: I'll never talk at this rate any more. *[Fantome still advances, drumming.]* By my soul, Sir George, I was not in earnest. *[Falls on his knees.]* Have compassion on my youth, and consider I am but a coxcomb. *[Fantome points to the door.]* But see, he waves me off—Ay, with all my heart——What a devil had I to do with a white sheet?

[He steals off the stage, mending his pace as the drum beats.]

Fan. The scoundrel is gone, and has left his mistress behind him; I'm mistaken if he makes love in this house any more. I have now only the conjurer to deal with. I don't question but I shall make his reverence scamper as fast as the lover; and then the day's my own. But the servants are coming; I must get into my cupboard.

[He goes in.]

Enter Abigail and Servants.

Ab. Oh, my poor Lady! This wicked drum has frightened Mr. Tinsel out of his wits, and my Lady into a swoon. Let me bend her a little forward. She revives. Here, carry her into the fresh air, and she'll recover. *[They carry her off.]* This is a little barbarous to my Lady; but 'tis all for her good: and I know her so well, that she would not be angry with me, if she knew what I was to



THE DRUMMER.

get by it. And if any of her friends should blame me for it hereafter,

I'll clap my hand upon my purse, and tell 'em,
'Twas for a thousand pounds, and Mr. Vellum. *Exit.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Sir George in his conjurer's habit; the Butler marching before him, with two large candles; and the two Servants coming after him, one bringing a little table, and another a chair.

BUTLER.

AN'T please your worship, Mr. Conjurer, the steward has given all of us orders to do whatsoever you shall bid us, and to pay you the same respect as if you were our master.

Sir G. Thou say'st well.

Gard. An't please your conjurership's worship, shall I set the table down here?

Sir G. Here, Peter.

Gard. Peter!—He knows my name by his learning.

[Aside.]

Coach. I have brought you, reverend Sir, the largest elbow-chair in the house; 'tis that the steward sits in, when he holds a court.

Sir G. Place it there.

But. Sir, will you please to want any thing else?

Sir G. Paper, and a pen and ink.

But. Sir, I believe we have paper that is fit for your purpose; my Lady's mourning paper, that is blacked at the edges. Would you choose to write with a crow-quill?

Sir G. There is none better.

But. Coachman, go fetch the paper and standish out of the little parlour.

Coach. *[To Gard.]* Peter, pr'ythee, do thou go along with me—I'm afraid——You know I went with you, last night, into the garden, when the cook-maid wanted a handful of parsley.

But. Why, you don't think I'll stay with the conjurer by myself?

THE DRUMMER.

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Gard. Come, we'll all three go and fetch the pen and ink together. *[Exeunt Servants.]*

Sir G. There's nothing, I see, makes such strong alliances as fear. These fellows are all entered into a confederacy against the ghost. There must be abundance of business done in the family, at this rate. But here comes the triple-alliance. Who could have thought these three rogues could have found each of them an employment in fetching a pen and ink?

Enter Gardiner with a sheet of paper, Coachman with a standish, and Butler with a pen.

Gard. Sir, there is your paper.

Coach. Sir, there is your standish.

But. Sir, there is your crow-quill pen—I'm glad I have got rid on't. *[Aside.]*

Gard. *[Aside.]* He forgets that he's to make a circle—Doctor, shall I help you to a bit of chalk?

Sir G. It is no matter.

But. Look ye, Sir, I show'd you the spot where he's heard ofteneft. If your worship can but ferret him out of that old wall in the next room——

Sir G. We shall try.

Gard. That's right, John. His worship must let fly all his learning at that old wall.

But. Sir, if I was worthy to advise you, I would have a bottle of good October by me. Shall I set a cup of old stingo at your elbow?

Sir G. I thank thee—we shall do without it.

Gard. John, he seems a very good-natured man, for a conjurer.

But. I'll take this opportunity of enquiring after a bit of plate I have lost. I fancy, whilst he is in my Lady's pay, one may hedge in a question or two into the bargain. Sir, Sir, may I beg a word in your ear.

Sir G. What wouldst thou?

But. Sir, I know I need not tell you, that I lost one of my silver spoons last week.

Sir G. Marked with a swan's neck——

But. My Lady's crest! He knows every thing. *[Aside.]* How would your worship advise me to recover it again?

Sir G. Hum——

But. What must I do to come at it?

Sir G. Drink nothing but small-beer for a fortnight—

But. Small-beer! rot-gut!

Sir G. If thou drink'st a single drop of ale before fifteen days are expired—it is as much—as thy spoon—is worth.

But. I shall never recover it that way—I'll e'en buy a new one. [*Aside.*]

Coach. D'ye mind how they whisper?

Gard. I'll be hanged if he be not asking him something about Nell—

Coach. I'll take this opportunity of putting a question to him, about poor Dobbin. I fancy he could give me better counsel than the farrier.

But. [*To Gard.*] A prodigious man! he knows every thing. Now is the time to find out thy pick-ax.

Gard. I have nothing to give him. Does not he expect to have his hand cross'd with silver?

Coach. [*To Sir G.*] Sir, may a man venture to ask you a question?

Sir G. Ask it.

Coach. I have a poor horse, in the stable, that's bewitch'd—

Sir G. A bay gelding.

Coach. How could he know that? [*Aside.*]

Sir G. Bought at Badbury.

Coach. Whew!—So it was, o' my conscience. [*Whistles.*]

Sir G. Six years, old last Lammas.

Coach. To a day. [*Aside.*] Now, Sir, I would know whether the poor beast is bewitch'd by Goody Crouch, or Goody Fly?

Sir G. Neither.

Coach. Then it must be Goody Gurton; for she is the next oldest woman in the parish.

Gard. Hast thou done, Robin?

Coach. [*To Gard.*] He can tell thee any thing.

Gard. [*To Sir G.*] Sir I would beg to take you a little further out of hearing—

Sir G. Speak.

Gard. The butler and I, Mr. Doctor, were both of us in love, at the same time, with a certain person.

Sir G. A woman.

Gard. How could he know that?

[*Aside.*
Sir

Sir G. Go on.

Gard. This woman has lately had two children at a birth.

Sir G. Twins.

Gard. Prodigious! Where could he hear that? [*Aside.*]

Sir G. Proceed.

Gard. Now, because I used to meet her sometimes in the garden, she has laid them both——

Sir G. To thee.

Gard. What a power of learning he must have! he knows every thing. [*Aside.*]

Sir G. Hast thou done?

Gard. I would desire to know, whether I am really father to them both?

Sir G. Stand before me; let me survey thee round.

[*Lays his wand upon his head, and makes him turn about.*]

Coach. Look yonder, John, the silly dog is turning about under the conjurer's wand. If he has been saucy to him, we shall see him puffed off in a whirlwind immediately.

Sir G. Twins, dost thou say? [*Still turning him.*]

Gard. Ay, are they both mine, d'ye think?

Sir G. Own but one of them.

Gard. Ay, but Mrs. Abigail will have me take care of them both—she's always for the butler——If my poor master, Sir George, had been alive, he would have made him go halves with me.

Sir G. What, was Sir George a kind master.

Gard. Was he! Ay, my fellow-servants will bear me witness.

Sir G. Did ye love Sir George?

But. Every body loved him——

Coach. There was not a dry eye in the parish, at the news of his death——

Gard. He was the best neighbour——

But. The kindest husband——

Coach. The truest friend to the poor——

But. My Lady took on mightily; we all thought it would have been the death of her——

Sir G. I protest these fellows melt me——I think the time long, till I am their master again, that I may be kind to them.

[*Aside.*
Enter

Enter Vellum.

Kel. Have you provided the doctor every thing he has occasion for? — If so — you may depart.

[Exeunt Servants.]

Sir G. I can, as yet, see no hurt in my wife's behaviour; but still have some certain pangs and doubts, that are natural to the heart of a fond man. 'I must take the advantage of my disguise, to be thoroughly satisfied.' It would neither be for her happiness nor mine, to make myself known to her, till I am so. *[Aside.]* Dear Vellum, I am impatient to hear some news of my wife. How does she, after her fright?

Vel. It is a saying somewhere in my Lord Coke, that a widow —

Sir G. I ask of my wife, and thou talk'st to me of my Lord Coke — Pr'ythee, tell me how she does; for I am in pain for her.

Vel. She is pretty well recovered. Mrs. Abigail has put her in good heart; and I have given her great hopes from your skill.

Sir G. That, I think, cannot fail, since thou hast got this secret out of Abigail. But I could not have thought my friend Fantome would have served me thus.

Kel. You will still fancy you are a living man.

Sir G. That he should endeavour to ease my wife —

Vel. You have no right in her after your demise. Death extinguishes all property — *Quod bene* — It is a maxim in the law.

Sir G. A pax on your learning! Well, but what is become of Tinsel?

Vel. He rushed out of the house, called for his horse, clapped spurs to his sides, and was out of sight in less time than I can tell ten.

Sir G. This is whimsical enough. My wife will have a quick succession of lovers in one day. Fantome has driven out Tinsel, and I shall drive out Fantome.

Vel. Even as one wedge driveth out another — He, he, he! You must pardon me for being jocular.

Sir G. Was there ever such a provoking blockhead? But he means me well — Well, I must have satisfaction of this traitor, Fantome; and cannot take a more proper one, than by turning him out of my house, in a manner

'manner that shall throw shame upon him, and make him ridiculous as long as he lives.'—You must remember, Vellum, you have abundance of business upon your hands; and I have but just time to tell it you over. All I require of you is dispatch; therefore, hear me.

Vel. There is nothing more requisite in business than dispatch——

Sir G. Then hear me.

Vel. It is, indeed, the life of business——

Sir G. Hear me then, I say.

Vel. And, as one hath rightly observed, the benefit that attends it is fourfold. First——

Sir G. There is no bearing this. Thou art going to describe dispatch, when thou should'st be practising it.

Vel. But your ho—nour will not give me the hearing——

Sir G. Thou wilt not give me the hearing. [*Angrily.*]

Vel. I am still.

Sir G. In the first place, you are to lay my wig, hat, and sword ready for me in the closet, and one of my scarlet coats. You know how Abigail has described the ghost to you.

Vel. It shall be done.

Sir G. Then you must remember, whilst I am laying this ghost, you are to prepare my wife for the reception of her real husband. Tell her the whole story, and do it with all the art you are master of, that the surprise may not be too great for her.

Vel. It shall be done. But since her ho—nour has seen this apparition, she desires to see you once more, before you encounter it.

Sir G. I shall expect her impatiently; for now I can talk to her without being interrupted by that impertinent rogue, Tinsel. I hope thou hast not told Abigail any thing of the secret.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail is a woman; there are many reasons why she should not be acquainted with it: I shall only mention six——

Sir G. Hush, here she comes! Oh, my heart!

Enter Lady Trumen and Abigail.

Sir G. [*Aside, while Vellum talks in dumb show to Lady Trump.*] Oh, that lov'd woman! How I long to take her

her in my arms ! If I find I am still dear to her memory, it will be a return to life indeed. But I must take care of indulging this tenderness, and put on a behaviour more suitable to my present character.

[Walks at a distance in a pensive posture, waving his wand.]

Lady T. *[To Vellum.]* This is surprising indeed ! So all the servants tell me ; they say he knows every thing that has happened in the family.

Ab. *[Aside.]* A parcel of credulous fools ; they first tell him their secrets, and then wonder how he comes to know them.

[Exit Vellum, exchanging fond looks with Abigail.]

Lady T. Learned Sir, may I have some conversation with you, before you begin your ceremonies ?

Sir G. Speak—But hold—First, let me feel your pulse.

Lady T. What can you learn from that ?

Sir G. I have already learned a secret from it, that will astonish you.

Lady T. Pray, what is it ?

Sir G. You will have a husband within this half hour.

Ab. *[Aside.]* I am glad to hear that—He must mean Mr. Fantome. I begin to think there's a good deal of truth in his art.

Lady T. Alas ! I fear you mean I shall see Sir George's apparition a second time.

Sir G. Have courage ; you shall see the apparition no more. The husband I mention, shall be as much alive as I am.

Ab. Mr. Fantome, to be sure. *[Aside.]*

Lady T. Impossible ; I loved my first too well.

Sir G. You could not love the first better than you will love the second.

Ab. *[Aside.]* I'll be hanged if my dear steward has not instructed him. He means Mr. Fantome, to be sure. 'The thousand pound is our own.'

Lady T. Alas, you did not know Sir George !

Sir G. As well as I do myself—I saw him with you in the red damask room, when he first made love to you ; your mother left you together, under pretence of receiving a visit from Mrs. Hawthorn, on her return from London.

Lady

Lady T. This is astonishing!

Sir G. You were a great admirer of a single life for the first half hour; your refusals then grew still fainter and fainter. With what ecstacy did Sir George kiss your hand, when you told him you should always follow the advice of your mamma!

Lady T. Every circumstance, to a tittle!

Sir G. Then, Lady, the wedding-night! I saw you in your white satin night-gown. You would not come out of your dressing-room, till Sir George took you out by force. He drew you gently by the hand—You struggled—but he was too strong for you—You blushed; he——

Lady T. Oh, stop there! go no further—He knows every thing. *[Aside.]*

Ab. Truly, Mr. Conjurer, I believe you have been a wag in your youth.

Sir G. Mrs. Abigail, you know what your good ward cost Sir George; a purse of broad pieces, Mrs. Abigail—

Ab. The devil's in him. *[Aside.]* Pray, Sir, since you have told so far, you should tell my Lady, that I refused to take them.

Sir G. 'Tis true, child, he was forced to thrust them in to your bosom.

Ab. This rogue will mention the thousand pounds, if I don't take care. *[Aside.]* Pray, Sir, though you are a conjurer, methinks you need not be a blab.

Lady T. Sir, since I have now no reason to doubt of your art, I must beseech you to treat this apparition gently, It has the resemblance of my deceased husband. If there be any undiscovered secret, any thing that troubles his rest, learn it of him.

Sir G. I must, to that end, be sincerely informed by you, whether your heart be engaged to another. Have not you received the addresses of many lovers, since his death?

Lady T. I have been obliged to receive more visits than have been agreeable.

Sir G. Was not Tinsel welcome?—I'm afraid to hear an answer to my own question. *[Aside.]*

Lady T. He was well recommended.

Sir G. Racks!

[Aside.]
Lady T.

Lady T. Of a good family.

Sir G. Tortures!

[*Aside.*]

Lady T. Heir to a considerable estate.

Sir G. Death! [*Aside.*] And you still love him?—
I'm distracted!

[*Aside.*]

Lady T. No, I despise him. I found he had a design upon my fortune; was base, profligate, cowardly, and every thing that could be expected from a man of the vilest principles.

Sir G. I'm recovered.

[*Aside.*]

Ab. Oh, Madam, had you seen how like a scoundrel he looked, when he left your ladyship in a swoon! Where have you left my Lady? says I. In an elbow-chair child, says he. And where are you going? says I. To town, child, says he? for, to tell thee truly, child, says he, I don't care for living under the same roof with the devil, says he.

Sir G. Well, Lady, I see nothing in all this, that may hinder Sir George's spirit from being at rest.

Lady T. If he knows any thing of what passes in my heart he cannot but be satisfied of that fondness which I bear to his memory. My sorrow for him is always fresh when I think of him. He was the kindest, truest, tenderest—Tears will not let me go on—

Sir G. This quite overpowers me—I shall discover myself before my time. [*Aside.*] Madam, you may now retire, and leave me to myself.

Lady T. Success attend you.

Ab. I wish Mr. Fantome gets well off from this old Don—I know he'll be with him immediately.

[*Exeunt Lady Truman and Abigail.*]

Sir G. My heart is now at ease; she is the same dear woman I left her. Now for my revenge upon Fantome. I shall cut the ceremonies short—A few words will do his business—Now, let me seat myself in form—A good easy chair for a conjurer, this—Now for a few mathematical scratches—A good lucky scrawl, that—Faith, I think it looks very astrological—These two or three magical pot-hooks about it, make it a complete conjurer's scheme. [*Drum beats.*] Ha, ha, ha, Sir! are you there? Enter drummer—Now must I pore upon my paper.

Enter

Enter Fantome, beating his drum.

Pr'ythee don't make a noise, I'm busy. [Fantome beats.] A pretty march! pr'ythee beat that over again. [He beats and advances.] [Rising.] Ha! you're very perfect in the step of a ghost. You stalk it majestically. [Fantome advances.] How the rogue stares, he acts it to admiration; I'll be hanged, if he has not been practising this half hour in Mrs. Abigail's wardrobe. [Fantome starts, gives a rap with his drum.] Pr'ythee don't play the fool. [Fantome beats.] Nay, nay, enough of this, good Mr. Fantome.

Fan. [*Aside.*] Death! I am discovered. This jade, Abigail, has betrayed me.

Sir G. Mr. Fantome, upon the word of an astrologer, your thousand pound bribe will never gain my Lady Truman.

Fan. 'Tis plain, she has told him all. [*Aside.*]

Sir G. Let me advise you to make off as fast as you can; or I plainly perceive by my art, Mr. Ghost will have his bones broke.

Fan. [*To Sir G.*] Look ye, old gentleman, I perceive you have learned this secret from Mrs. Abigail.

Sir G. I have learned it from my art.

Fan. Thy art! pr'ythee no more of that. Look ye, I know you are a cheat as much as I am. And if thou'lt keep my counsel, I'll give thee ten broad pieces.

Sir G. I am not mercenary! Young man, I scorn thy gold.

Fan. I'll make them up twenty.—

Sir G. Avaunt! and that quickly, or I'll raise such an apparition as shall—

Fan. An apparition, old gentleman! you mistake your man, I'm not to be frightened with bugbears!—

Sir G. Let me retire but for a few moments, and I will give thee such a proof of my art—

Fan. Why, if thou hast any *hocus-pocus* tricks to play, why can'st thou not do them here?

Sir G. The raising of a spirit, requires certain secret mysteries to be performed, and words to be muttered in private—

Fan. Well, if I see through your trick, will you promise to be my friend?

Sir

Sir G. I will———attend and tremble. *[Exit.]*

Fan. *[Alone.]* A very solemn old ass! But I smoke him,——he has a mind to raise his price upon me. I could not think this slut would have used me thus.—I begin to grow horribly tired of my drum. I wish I was well rid of it. However, I have got this by it, that it has driven off Tinsel for good and all; I shan't have the mortification to see my mistress carried off by such a rival. Well, whatever happens, I must stop this old fellow's mouth; I must not be sparing in hush-money. But here he comes.

Enter Sir George in his own habit.

Ha! what's that! Sir George Truman! This can be no counterfeit. His dress! his shape! his face! the very wound of which he died! Nay, then 'tis time to decamp! *[Runs off.]*

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! Fare you well, good Sir George—The enemy has left me master of the field: here are the marks of my victory. This drum will I hang up in my great hall as the trophy of the day.

Enter Abigail.

Sir George stands with his hand before his face in a musing posture.

Ab. Yonder he is. O my conscience, he has driven off the conjurer. Mr. Fantome, Mr. Fantome! I give you joy, I give you joy. What do you think of your thousand pounds now, why does not the man speak?

[Pulls him by the sleeve.]

Sir G. Ha!

[Taking his hand from his face.]

Ab. Oh, 'tis my master!

[Shrieks.]

[Running away he catches her.]

Sir G. Good Mrs. Abigail, not so fast.

Ab. Are you alive, Sir? He has given my shoulder such a cursed tweak! they must be real fingers, I feel them I'm sure.

Sir G. What dost thou think?

Ab. Think, Sir! think! Troth, I don't know what to think. Pray, Sir, how——

Sir G. No questions, good Abigail; thy curiosity shall be satisfied in due time. Where's your Lady?

Ab. Oh, I'm so frighted!——and so glad——

Sir

Sir G. Where's your Lady? I ask you——

Ab. Marry, I don't know where I am myself—I can't forbear weeping for joy——

Sir G. Your Lady! I say your Lady! I must bring you to yourself with one pinch more——

Ab. Oh, she has been talking a good while with the steward.

Sir G. Then he has opened the whole story to her. I'm glad he has prepared her. Oh, here she comes.

Enter Lady Truman followed by Vellum.

Lady T. Where is he? let me fly into his arms! my life! my soul! my husband!

Sir G. Oh, let me catch thee to my heart, dearest of women.

Lady T. Are you then still alive, and are you here! I can scarce believe my senses! Now am I happy indeed!

Sir G. My heart is too full to answer thee.

Lady T. How could you be so cruel to defer giving me that joy which you knew I must receive from your presence! You have robbed my life of some hours of happiness that ought to have been in it.

Sir G. It was to make our happiness the more sincere and unmixed: there will be now no doubts to dish it. What has been the affliction of our lives, has given a variety to them, and will hereafter supply us with a thousand materials to talk of.

Lady T. I am now satisfied that it is not in the power of absence to lessen your love towards me.

Sir G. And I am satisfied that it is not in the power of death to destroy that love which makes me the happiest of men."

Lady T. Was ever woman so b'essed! to find again the darling of her soul, when she thought him lost for ever! to enter into a kind of second marriage with the only man whom she was ever capable of loving!

Sir G. May it be as happy as our first, I desire no more! Believe me, my dear, I want words to express those transports of joy and tenderness which are every moment rising in my heart whilst I speak to thee.

Enter Servants.

But. Just as the steward told us, lads!——Look you there, if he ben't with my Lady already?

F

Card.

Gard. He, he, he! what a joyful night will this be for Madam.

Coach. As I was coming in at the gate, a strange gentleman, whisked by me; but he took to his heels, and made away to the George. If I did not see master before me, I should have sworn it had been his honour!

Gard. Hast thou given orders for the bells to be set a ringing?

Coach. Never trouble thy head about that, 'tis done.

Sir G. [To Lady T.] My dear, I long as much to tell you my whole story, as you do to hear it. In the mean while I am to look upon this as my wedding-day. I'll have nothing but the voice of mirth and feasting in my house. My poor neighbours and my servants shall rejoice with me. My hall shall be free to every one, and let my cellars be thrown open.

But. Ah, bless your honour, may you never die again!

Coach. The same good man that ever he was!

Gard. Whurra!

Sir G. Vellum, thou hast done me much service to-day. I know thou lovest Abigail; but she's disappointed in a fortune. I'll make it up to both of you. I'll give thee a thousand pounds with her. It is not fit there should be one sad heart in my house to-night.

Lady T. What you do for Abigail, I know is meant as a compliment to me. This is a new instance of your love.

Ab. Mr. Vellum, you are a well-spoken man: pray do you thank my master and my lady.

Sir G. Vellum, I hope you are not displeased with the gift I make you.

Vcl. The gift is twofold. - I receive from you
A virtuous partner, and a portion too;
For which my humble wife, I thank the donors:
And so we bid good-night to both your honours.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



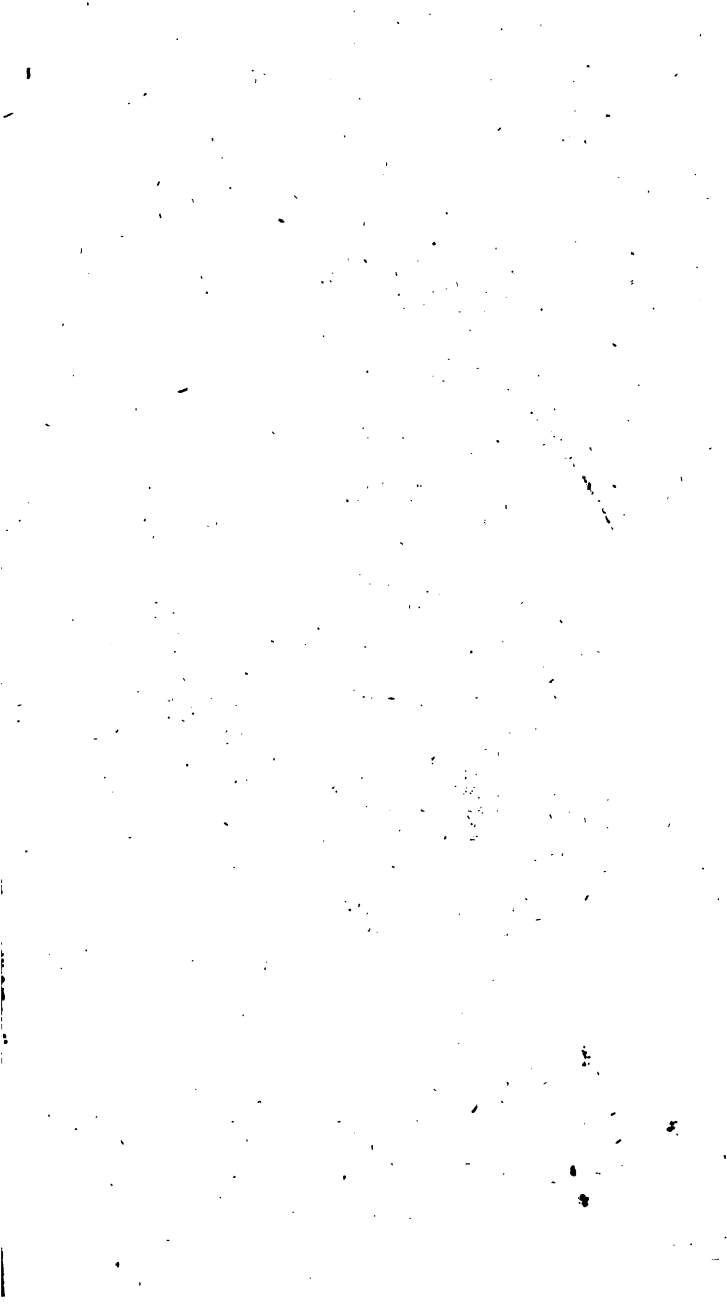
E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Lady TRUMAN.

*T*O-night, the poet's advocate I stand;
 And he deserves the favour at my hand,
 Who in my equipage their cause debating,
 Has plac'd two lovers, and a third in waiting:
 If both the first should from their duty swerve,
 There's one behind the wainscot in reserve.
 In his next play, if I would take this trouble,
 He promis'd me to make the number double:
 In troth 'twas spoke like an obliging creature,
 For though 'tis simple, yet it shews good-nature.
 My help thus ask'd, I could not choose but grant it,
 And really I thought the play would want it,
 Void as it is of all the usual arts
 To warm your fancies, and to steal your hearts:
 No court-intrigue, nor city cuckoldom,
 No song, no dance, no music—but a drum——
 No smutty thought in doubtful phrase express'd,
 And, gentlemen, if so, pray where's the jest?
 When we would raise your mirth, your hardly know
 Whether, in strictness, you should laugh or no;
 But turn upon the ladies in the pit,
 And if they redder, you are sure 'tis wit.
 Protect him then, ye fair ones; for the fair
 Of all conditions are his equal care.
 He draws a widow, who, of blameless carriage,
 True to her jointure, bates a second marriage;
 And, to improve a virtuous wife's delights,
 Out of one man, contrives two wedding nights;
 Nay, to oblige the sex in ev'ry state,
 A nymph of five and forty finds her mate.
 Too long has marriage, in this tasteless age,
 With ill-bred raillery supply'd the stage:

*No little scribbler is of wit so bare,
But has his sling at the poor wedded pair.
Our author deals not in conceits so stale:
For should th' examples of his play prevail,
No man need blush, though true to marriage-vows,
Nor be a jest, though he should love his spouse.
Thus has he done you British consorts right,
Whose husbands, should they pry like mine to-night,
Would never find you in your conduct slipping,
Though they turn'd conjurers to take you tripping.*







J. Roberts del.

Published for Bells British Theatre May 20 1777.

*M^{rs} YATES in the Character of BERINTHEA.
O Heavens! I would not be in the dark with you
for all the World.*

BELL'S EDITION.

THE
RELAPSE:
OR,
VIRTUE IN DANGER.

A COMEDY,

As written by Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

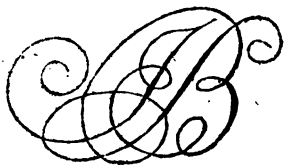
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book.

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. WILD, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVII.



T H E P R E F A C E.

TO go about to excuse half the defects this abominable brat is come into the world with, would be to provoke the town with a long useless preface, when it is, I doubt, sufficiently soured already by a tedious play.

I do therefore (with the humility of a repenting sinner) confess, it wants every thing—but length; and in that, I hope, the severest critic will be pleased to acknowledge I have not been wanting. But my modesty will sure atone for every thing, when the world shall know it is so great, I am even to this day insensible of those two shining graces in the play, (which some part of the town is pleased to compliment me with) blasphemy and bawdy.

For my part, I cannot find them out: if there were any obscene expressions upon the stage, here they are in the print; for I have dealt fairly, I have not sunk a syllable, that could (though by racking of mysteries) be ranged under that head; and yet I believe with a steady faith, there is not one woman of a real reputation in town, but when she has read it impartially over in her closet, will find it so innocent, she will think it no affront to her prayer-book, to lay it upon the same shelf. So to them (with all manner of deference) I entirely refer my cause; and I am confident they will justify me against those pretenders to good-manners, who at the same time, have so little respect for the ladies, they would extract a bawdy jest from an ejaculation, to put them out of countenance. But I expect to have these well-bred persons always my enemies, since I am sure I shall never write any thing lewd enough to make them my friends.

As for the saints (your thorough-paced ones, I mean, with skewed faces and wry mouths) I despair of them; for they are friends to nobody: they love nothing but

their altars and themselves; they have too much zeal to have any charity; they make debauchees in piety, as sinners do in wine; and are as quarrelsome in their religion, as other people are in their drink: so I hope nobody will mind what they say. But if any man (with flat piod shoes, a little band, greasy hair, and a dirty face, who is wiser than I, at the expence of being forty years older) happens to be offended at a story of a cock and a bull, and a priest and a bull-dog, I beg his pardon with all my heart; which, I hope, I shall obtain, by eating my words, and making this public recantation. I do therefore, for his satisfaction, acknowledge I lied, when I said, they never quit their hold; for in that little time I have lived in the world, I thank God I have seen them forced to it more than once; but next time I will speak with more caution and truth, and only say, they have very good teeth.

If I have offended any honest gentleman of the town, whose friendship or good word is worth the having, I am very sorry for it; I hope they will correct me as gently as they can, when they consider I have had no other design, in running a very great risk, than to divert (if possible) some part of their spleen, in spite of their wives and their taxes.

One word more about the bawdy, and I have done. I own the first night this thing was acted, some indecencies had like to have happened; but it was not my fault.

The fine gentleman of the play, drinking his mistress's health in Nants brandy, from six in the morning to the time he waddled on upon the stage in the evening, had toasted himself up to such a pitch of vigour, I confess I once gave Amanda for gone, and am since (with all due respect to Mrs. Rogers) very sorry she escaped; for I am confident a certain lady (let no one take it to herself that is handsome) who highly blames the play, for the barrenness of the conclusion, would then have allowed it a very natural close.

P R O L O G U E.

LADIES, this play in too much in haste was writ,
 To be o'ercharg'd with either plot or wit;
 'Twas got, conceiv'd, and born in six weeks space,
 And wit, you know, 's as slow in growth—as grace.
 Sure it can ne'er be ripen'd to your taste;
 I doubt 'twill prove our author bred too fast:
 For mark them well, who with the muses marry,
 They rarely do conceive, but they miscarry.
 'Tis the hard fate of those who are big with rhyme,
 Still to be brought to bed before their time.
 Of our late poets nature few has made;
 The greatest part—are only so by trade.
 Still want of something brings the scribbling fit;
 For want of money some of 'em have writ,
 And others do't, you see—for want of wit.
 Honour, they fancy, summons 'em to write,
 So out they lug in resty nature's spight,
 As some of your spruce beaux do—when you fight.
 Yet let the ebb of wit be ne'er so low,
 Some glimpse of it a man may hope to show,
 Upon a theme so ample—as a beau.
 So, howsoe'er true courage may decay,
 Perhaps there's not one smock-face here to-day,
 But's bold as Cæsar, to attack a play.
 Nay, what's yet more, with an undaunted face,
 To do the thing with more heroic grace,
 'Tis fix to ~~four~~ y' attack the strongest place.
 You are such Hotspurs in this kind of venture,
 Where there's no breach, just there you needs must enter.
 But be advis'd—
 E'en give the here and the critique o'er,
 For nature sent you on another score;
 She form'd her beau, for nothing but her whore.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Covent-Garden.

Sir <i>Novelty Fashion</i> , newly created		
Lord <i>Foppington</i> ,	_____	Mr. Woodward.
Young <i>Fashion</i> , his brother	—	Mr. Dyar.
<i>Loveless</i> , husband to <i>Amanda</i> ,	—	Mr. Smith.
<i>Worthy</i> , a gentleman of the town,		Mr. Hull.
Sir <i>Tunbelly Clumsy</i> , a country gentleman,	_____	Mr. Dunfall.
Sir <i>John Friendly</i> , his neighbour,		Mr. Davis.
<i>Coupler</i> , a matchmaker,	—	Mr. Quick.
<i>Bull</i> , chaplain to Sir <i>Tunbelly</i> ,		Mr. Saunders.
<i>Syringe</i> , a surgeon,	_____	Mr. Shuter.
<i>Lory</i> , servant to young <i>Fashion</i> ,		Mr. Cushing.
<i>La Varole</i> ,	_____	Mr. Holtom.
Page,	_____	Mr. Harris.
Hofier,	_____	Mr. Thompson.
Shoe-maker	_____	Mr. Hamilton.
Taylor,	_____	Mr. Fox.

W O M E N.

<i>Amanda</i> , wife to <i>Loveless</i> ,	_____	Mrs. Vincent.
<i>Berinthia</i> , her cousin, a young widow,	_____	Mrs. Bellamy.
Miss <i>Hoyden</i> , a great fortune,		
daughter to Sir <i>Tunbelly</i> ,	—	Mrs. Mattocks.
Nurse, her governante,	_____	Mrs. Pitt.
Sempstress,	_____	Mrs. White.
<i>Amanda's</i> woman,	— —	Mrs. Evans.

THE

THE RELAPSE.

* * The lines marked with inverted commas, 'thus,' are omitted in the representation.

A C T I.

Enter Loveless reading.

' **H**OW true is that philosophy which says
' Our heaven is seated in our minds !
' Through all the roving pleasures of my youth,
' (Where nights and days seem all consum'd in joy,)
' I never knew one moment's peace like this.
Here—in this little soft retreat,
The raging flame of wild destructive lust
Reduc'd to a warm pleasing fire of lawful love,
My life glides on, and all is well within.

Enter Amanda.

How does the happy cause of my content, my dear
You find me musing on my happy state, [Amanda?
And full of grateful thoughts to Heaven, and you.

Aman. Those grateful offerings Heaven can't receive
With more delight than I do :
Would I could share with it as well
The dispensations of its bliss ;
That I might search its choicest favours out,
And shower them on your head for ever.

Lov. The largest boons that Heaven thinks fit to grant,
To things it has decreed shall crawl on earth,
Are in the gift of women form'd like you.

' Perhaps, when time shall be no more,
' When the aspiring soul shall take its flight,
' And drop this pond'rous lump of clay behind it,

' It

‘ It may have appetites we know not of,
 ‘ And pleasures as refin’d as its desires—
 ‘ But till that day of knowledge shall instruct me,
 The utmost blessing that my thought can reach,
 [*Taking her in his arms.*] Is folded in my arms, and rooted
 in my heart.

Aman. There let it grow for ever.

Lov. Well said, Amanda—let it be for ever—
 Wou’d Heaven grant that—

Aman. ’Twere all the heaven I’d ask.

But ‘ we are clad in black mortality,
 ‘ And the dark curtain of eternal night,
 ‘ At last must drop between us.

‘ *Lov.* It must: that mournful separation we must see.
 ‘ A bitter pill it is to all; but doubles its ungrateful taste,
 ‘ When lovers are to swallow it.

‘ *Aman.* Perhaps that pain may only be my lot,
 ‘ You possibly may be exempted from it;
 ‘ Men find out softer ways to quench their fires.’

Lov. Can you then doubt my constancy, Amanda?
 You’ll find ’tis built upon a steady basis—

The rock of reason now supports my love;

On which it stands so fix’d,

The rudest hurricane of wild desire

Wou’d like the breath of a soft slumbering babe,

Pass by, and never shake it.

Aman. Yet still ’tis safer to avoid the storm;

The strongest vessels, if they put to sea,

May possibly be lost.

Wou’d I cou’d keep you here in this calm port for ever.

Forgive the weakness of a woman,

I am uneasy at your going to stay so long in town;

I know its false insinuating pleasures;

I know the force of its delusions;

I know the strength of its attacks;

I know the weak defence of nature;

I know you are a man—and I—a wife.

Love. You know then all that needs to give you rest,

For wife’s the strongest claim that you can urge.

When you would plead your title to my heart,

On this you may depend; therefore be calm,

Banish your fears; for they are traitors to your peace;

- Beware of them, they are insinuating busy-things,
- That gossip to and fro, and do a world of mischief
- Where they come: but you shall soon be mistress of 'em
- I'll aid you with such arms for their destruction, [all.
- They never shall erect their heads again.'

You know the business is indispensable, that obliges
Me to go to London, and you have no reason, that I
Know of, to believe that I'm glad of the occasion:

- For my honest conscience is my witness,
 - I have found a due succession of such charms
 - In my retirement here with you,
 - I have never thrown one roving thought that way,
- But since, against my will, I'm dragg'd once more
To that uneasy theatre of noise,
I am resolv'd to make such use on't,
As shall convince you 'tis an old cast mistress,
Who has been so lavish of her favours,
She's now grown bankrupt of her charms,
And has not one allurements left to move me.

Aman. Her bow, I do believe, is grown so weak,
Her arrows, at this distance, cannot hurt you,
But in approaching 'em you give 'em strength:
The dart that has not far to fly,
Will put the best of armour to a dangerous trial.

Love. That trial past, you are at ease for ever;
• When you have seen the helmet prov'd,
• You'll apprehend no more for him that wears it.'
Therefore to put a lasting period to your fears,
I am resolv'd, this once, to launch into temptation;
• I'll give you an essay of all my virtues;
My former boon companions of the bottle
Shall fairly try what charms are left in wine:
They shall hem me in,
Sing praises to their God, and drink his glory;
Turn wild enthusiasts for his sake,
And bests to do him honour:
While I, a stubborn atheist,
Sullenly look on,
Without one reverend glass to his divinity.
That for my temperance:
Then for my constancy——

Aman. Ay, there take heed.

Love.

Love. Indeed the danger's small.

Aman. And yet my fears are great.

Love. Why are you so timorous?

Aman. Because you are so bold.

Love. My courage should disperse your apprehensions.

Aman. My apprehensions should alarm your courage.

Love. Fy, fy, Amanda, it is not kind thus to distrust me.

Aman. And yet my fears are founded on my love.

Love. Your love then is not founded as it ought;

For if you can believe 'tis possible

I shou'd again relapse to my past follies,

I must appear to you a thing

Of such an undigested composition,

That but to think of me with inclination,

Wou'd be a weakness in your taste,

Your virtue scarce cou'd answer.

Aman. 'Twou'd be a weakness in my tongue

My prudence cou'd not answer,

If I shou'd press you farther with my fears;

I'll therefore trouble you no longer with 'em.

Love. Nor shall they trouble you much longer,

A little time shall shew you they were groundless;

This winter shall be the fiery trial of my virtues.

Which, when it once has past,

You'll be convinc'd 'twas of no false alloy,

There all your cares will end—

Aman. Pray heaven they may. [*Exeunt band in band.*]

SCENE, Whiteball.

Enter Young Fashion and Lory.

Y. Fash. Come, pay the waterman, and take the portmanteau.

Lory. Faith, Sir, I gave the waterman the portmanteau, to pay himself.

Y. Fash. Why sure there's something left in't.

Lory. But a solitary old waistcoat, upon my honour, Sir.

Y. Fash. Why, what's become of the blue coat, firrah?

Lory. Sir, 'twas eaten at Gravesend; the reckoning came to thirty shillings, and your privy-purse was worth but two half-crowns.

Y. Fash. 'Tis very well.

Enter

Enter Waterman.

Wat. Pray, master, will you please to dispatch me?

T. Fash. Ay, here a——Canst thou change me a guinea?

Lory. [*Aside.*] Good.

Wat. Change a guinea, master! Ha, ha, your honour's pleased to compliment.

T. Fash. 'Egad I don't know how I shall pay thee then, for I have nothing but gold about me.

Lory. [*Aside.*]——Hum, hum.

T. Fash. What dost thou expect, friend?

Wat. Why, master, so far against wind and tide, is richly worth half a piece.

T. Fash. Why, faith, I think thou art a good conscientious fellow. 'Egad, I begin to have so good an opinion of thy honesty, I care not if I leave my portmantle with thee, till I send thee thy money.

Wat. Ha! God bless your honour; I should be as willing to trust you, master, but that you are, as a man may say, a stranger to me, and these are nimble times; there are a great many sharpeners stirring. [*Taking up the portmantle.*] Well, master, when your worship sends the money, your portmantle shall be forth-coming. My name's Tugg, my wife keeps a brandy-shop in Drab-Ally, at Wapping.

T. Fash. Very well; I'll send for't to-morrow.

[Exit Waterman.]

Lory. So—Now, Sir, I hope you'll own yourself a happy man, you have outlived all your cares.

T. Fash. How so, Sir?

Lory. Why you have nothing left to take care of.

T. Fash. Yes, firrah; I have myself and you to take care of still.

Lory. Sir, if you could but prevail with some body else to do that for you, I fancy we might both fare the better for't.

T. Fash. Why, if thou canst tell me where to apply myself, I have at present so little money, and so much humility about me, I don't know but I may follow a fool's advice.

Lory. Why then, Sir, your fool advises you to lay aside all animosity, and apply to Sir Novelty your elder brother.

T. Fash.

T. Fash. Damn my elder brother.

Lory. With all my heart; but get him to redeem your annuity however.

T. Fash. My annuity! 'Sdeath, he's such a dog, he would not give his powder puff to redeem my soul.

Lory. Look you, Sir, you must wheedle him, or you must starve.

T. Fash. Look you, Sir, I will neither wheedle him, nor starve.

Lory. Why, what will you do then?

T. Fash. I'll go into the army.

Lory. You can't take the oaths; you are a Jacobite.

T. Fash. Thou may'st as well say I can't take orders, because I'm an atheist.

Lory. Sir, I ask your pardon; I find I did not know the strength of your conscience, so well as I did the weakness of your purse.

T. Fash. Methinks, Sir, a person of your experience should have known, that the strength of the conscience proceeds from the weakness of the purse.

Lory. Sir, I am very glad to find you have a conscience able to take care of us, let it proceed from what it will; but I desire you'll please to consider, that the army alone will be but a scanty maintenance for a person of your generosity (at least as rents now are paid); I shall see you stand in damnable need of some auxiliary guineas for your *menu plaisirs*; I will therefore turn fool once more for your service, and advise you to go directly to your brother.

T. Fash. Art thou then so impregnable a blockhead, to believe he'll help me with a farthing.

Lory. Not if you treat him, *de haut en bas*, as you use to do.

T. Fash. Why, how wouldst have me treat him?

Lory. Like a trout, tickle him.

T. Fash. I can't flatter—

Lory. Can you starve?

T. Fash. Yes—

Lory. I can't: good-by-t'ye, Sir.

[Going.]

T. Fash. Stay, thou wilt distract me. What wouldst thou have me to say to him?

Lory. Say nothing to him; apply yourself to his favourites;

vourites; speak to his periwig, his cravat, his feather, his snuff-box, and when you are well with them—desire him to lend you a thousand pounds. I'll engage you prosper.

T. Fash. 'Sdeath and furies! Why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? Oh, Fortune—Fortune—Thou art a bitch, by gad— [Exit.]

SCENE, a Dressing-room.

Enter Lord Foppington in his night-gown.

Lord Fop. Page—

Enter Page.

Page. Sir.

Lord Fop. Sir! Pray, Sir, do me the favour to teach your tongue the title the king has thought fit to honour me with.

Page. I ask your Lordship's pardon, my Lord.

Lord F. Oh, you can pronounce the word, then. I thought it would have choked you—D'ye hear?

Page. My Lord.

Lord Fop. Call *La Varole*, I would dress—[Exit Page.] Well, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality—Strike me dumb—My Lord—Your Lordship—My Lord Foppington—*Ab! c'est quelque chose de beau, que le diable m'emporte*—Why, the ladies were ready to pewk at me, whilst I had nothing but Sir Novelty to recommend me to them—Sure, whilst I was but a knight, I was a very nauseous fellow—Well, 'tis ten thousand pawnd well given—stap my vitals—

Enter La Varole.

La Var. Me Lord, de shoemaker, de taylor, de hosier, de sempstrefs; de peruquier, be all ready, if your Lordship please to dress.

Lord Fop. 'Tis well, admit 'em.

La Var. Hey, messieurs, entrez.

Enter Taylor, &c.

Lord Fop. So, gentleman, I hope you have all taken pains to shew yourselves masters in your professions.

Tay. I think I may presume to say, Sir—

La Var. My Lord—You clown you.

Tay. Why, is he made a Lord?—My Lord, I ask your Lordship's pardon; my Lord, I hope, my Lord,

your lordship will please to own, I have brought your lordship as accomplished a suit of cloaths, as ever pear of England trod the stage in, my Lord. Will your lordship please to try them now ?

Lord Fop. Ay ; but let my people dispose the glasses so, that I may see myself before and behind ; for I love to see myself all round——

[*Whilst he puts on his cloaths, enter Young Fashion and Lory.*

T. Fash. Hey-day ! what the devil have we here ? Sure my gentleman's gown, a favourite at court, he has got so many people at his levee.

Lor. Sir, these people come in order to make him a favourite at court ; they are to establish him with the ladies.

T. Fash. Good God ! to what an ebb of taste are women fallen, that it should be in the power of a laced coat to recommend a gallant to them——

Lor. Sir, taylor and periwig-makers are now become the bawds of the nation ; 'tis they debauch all the women.

T. Fash. Thou say'st true ; for there's that fop now, has not, by nature, wherewithal to move a cook-maid ; and by that time these fellows have done with him, 'agad, he shall melt down a countess——But, now for my reception : I engage it shall be as cold a one, as a courtier's to his friend, who comes to put him in mind of his promise.

Lord Fop [*To his Taylor.*] Death, and eternal tatures ! Sir, I say the packer's too high, by a foot.

Tay. My Lord, if it had been an inch lower, it would not have held your lordship's pocket-handkerchief.

Lord Fop. Rat my pocket-handkerchief ! Have not I a page to carry it ? You may make him a packer up to his chin a purpose for it ; but I will not have mine come so near my face.

Tay. 'Tis not for me to dispute your lordship's fancy.

T. Fash. [*To Lory.*] His lordship, Lory ! Did you observe that ?

Lory. Yes, Sir, I always thought 'twould end there. Now, I hope, you'll have a little more respect for him.

T. Fash. Respect ! Damn him, for a coxcomb ; now has he ruined his estate to buy a title, that he may be a fool

feet of the best rate. But let's accost him——[To Lord Pop.] Brother, I'm your humble servant.

Lord Pop. Oh, land, Tum! I did not expect you in England. Brother, I'm glad to see you——[Turning to his Taylor.] Look you, Sir, I shall never be reconciled to this monstrous packet; therefore, pray, get me another suit, with all manner of expedition; for this is my eternal aversion. Mrs. Callicoe, are not you of my mind?

Semp. Oh, directly, my Lord! it can never be too low.

Lord Pop. You are positively in the right on't; for the packet becomes no part of the body but the knee.

Semp. I hope your lordship is pleased with your flackirk.

Lord Pop. In love with it, stay my vitals. Bring your bill; you shall be paid to-morrow——

Semp. I humbly thank your honour. [Exit Semp.]

Lord Pop. Mark thee, shoemaker; these shoes an't ugly; but they don't fit me.

Shoe. My Lord, methinks, they fit you very well.

Lord Pop. They hurt me just below the instep.

Shoe. [Feeling his foot.] My Lord, they don't hurt you there.

Lord Pop. I tell thee, they pinch me execrably.

Shoe. My Lord, if they pinch you, I'll be bound to be hang'd, that's all.

Lord Pop. Why, wilt thou undertake to persuade me I cannot feel?

Shoe. Your lordship may please to feel what you think fit; but that shoe does not hurt you——I think I understand my trade——

Lord Pop. Now, by all that's great and powerful, thou art an incomprehensible conceit; but thou makest good shoes; and so I'll bear with thee.

Shoe. My Lord, I have worked for half the people of quality in town, these twenty years; and 'tis very hard I should not know when a shoe hurts, and when it don't.

Lord Pop. Well, pr'ythee, begone about thy business.

[Exit Shoe.]

[To the Hofter.] Mr. Mendlegs, a word with you; the calves of the stockings are thickened a little too much. They make my legs look like a chairman's.

Mund. My Lord, methinks, they look mighty well.

Lord Fop. Ay, but you are not so good a judge of those things as I am; I have studied them all my life: therefore, pray, let the next be the thickness of a crown-piece less—[*Aside.*] If the town takes notice my legs are fallen away, 'twill be attributed to the violence of some new intrigue—[*To the Periwig-maker.*] Come, Mr. Foretop, let me see what you have done, and then the fatigue of the morning will be over.

Fore. My Lord, I have done what I defy any prince in Europe to out-do; I have made you a perriwig so long, and so full of hair, it will serve you for a hat and cloak in all weathers.

Lord Fop. Then thou hast made me thy friend to eternity. Come, comb it out.

T. Fash. Well, Lory, what dost think on't? A very friendly reception for a brother, after three years absence!

Lor. Why, Sir, 'tis your own fault; we seldom care for those that don't love what we love. If you would creep into his heart, you must enter into his pleasures—Here you have stood ever since you came in, and have not commended any one thing that belongs to him.

T. Fash. Nor never shall, while they belong to a coxcomb.

Lor. Then, Sir, you must be content to pick a hungry bone.

T. Fash. No, Sir, I'll crack it, and get to the marrow, before I have done.

Lord Fop. Gad's curse! Mr. Foretop, you don't intend to put this upon me for a full periwig?

Fore. Not a full one, my Lord! I don't know what your lordship may please to call a full one; but I have crammed twenty ounces of hair into it.

Lord Fop. What it may be by weight, Sir, I shall not dispute; but by tale, there are not nine hairs on a side.

Fore. Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! Why, as Gad shall judge me, your honour's side-face is reduced to the tip of your nose.

Lord Fop. My side-face may be in an eclipse, for

ought

weight I know ; but I'm sure my full-face is like the full-moon.

Fore. Heaven bless my eye-sight ! *[Rubbing his eyes.]*
Sure I look through the wrong end of the perspective !
for, by my faith, an't please your honour, the broadest place I see in your face, does not seem to me to be two inches diameter.

Lord Pop. If it did, it would be just two inches too broad ; for a perwig to a man, should be like a mask to a woman, nothing should be seen but his eyes.

Fore. My Lord, I have done. If you please to have more hair in your wig, I'll put it in.

Lord Pop. Positively, yes.

Fore. Shall I take it back now, my Lord ?

Lord Pop. No, I'll wear it to-day ; tho' it shew such a manifold pair of cheeks, skip my vitals, I shall be taken for a turnpeter. *[Exit Fore.]*

T. Fagb. Now your people of business are gone, brother, I hope I may obtain a quarter of an hour's audience of you.

Lord Pop. Faith, Tam, I must beg you'll excuse me at this time ; for I must away to the house of lords immediately : my Lady Teafot's case is to come on to-day, and I would not be absent for the salvation of mankind. Hey, page ! is the coach at the door ?

Page. Yes, my Lord.

Lord Pop. You'll excuse me, brother. *[Going.]*

T. Fagb. Shall you be back at dinner ?

Lord Pop. As God shall judge me, I can't tell ; for 'tis possible I may dine with some of our house at Lucker's.

T. Fagb. Shall I meet you there ? For I must needs talk with you.

Lord Pop. That, I'm afraid, mayn't be so proper ; for the lords I commonly eat with, are a people of a nice conversation ; and you know, Tam, your education has been a little at large : but if you'll stay here, you'll find a family dinner. Hey, fellow ! What is there for dinner ? There's beef. I suppose my brother will eat beef. Dear Tam, I'm glad to see thee in England, skip my vitals.

[Exit, with his equipage.]

T. Fagb. Well and sober ! is this to be borne ?

Lor. Faith, Sir, I could have almost given him a knock o'the pate myself.

Y. Fash. 'Tis enough—I will now shew you the excess of my passion, by being very calm. Come Lory, lay your loggerhead to mine, and, in cool blood, let us contrive his destruction.

Lor. Here comes a head, Sir, would contrive it better than us both, if he would but join in the confederacy.

Enter Coupler.

Y. Fash. By this light, old Coupler alive still! Why, how now, match-maker; art thou here still, to plague the world with matrimony? You old bawd, how have you the impudence to be hobbling out of your grave, twenty years after you are rotten?

Coup. When you begin to rot, firrah, you'll go off like a pippin; one winter will send you to the devil. What mischief brings you home again? Ha! You young lascivious rogue you: let me put my hand into your bosom, firrah.

Y. Fash. Stand off, old Sodom.

Coup. Nay, pr'ythee, now, don't be so coy.

Y. Fash. Keep your hands to yourself, you old dog you, or I'll wring your nose off.

Coup. Hast thou then been a year in Italy, and brought home a fool at last? By my conscience, the young fellows of this age profit no more by their going abroad, than they do by their going to church, Sirrah, firrah, if you are not hanged before you come to my years, you'll know a cock from a hen. But come, I'm still a friend to thy person, tho' I have a contempt of thy understanding: and therefore I would willingly know thy condition, that I may see whether thou standest in need of my assistance; for widows swarm, my boy; the town's infested with them.

Y. Fash. I stand in need of any body's assistance, that will help me to cut my elder brother's throat, without the risque of being hanged for him.

Coup. 'Egad, firrah, I could help thee to do him almost as good a turn, without the danger of being burnt in the hand for it.

Y. Fash. Say'st thou so, old Satan? Shew me but that, and my soul is thine.

Coup.

Coup. Pox o' thy soul! give me thy warm body, firrah; I shall have a substantial title to it, when I tell thee my project.

Y. Fash. Out with it then, dear dad, and take possession as soon as thou wilt.

Coup. Sayest thou so, my Hephsestion? Why, then, thus lies the scene—But hold—who's that? If we are heard, we are undone.

Y. Fash. What, have you forgot Lory?

Coup. Who, trusty Lory, is it thee?

Lory. At your service, Sir.

Coup. Give me thy hand, old boy. 'Egad, I did not know thee again; but I remember thy honesty, tho' I did not thy face; I think thou hadst like to have been hanged once or twice for thy master.

Lor. Sir, I was very near once having that honour.

Coup. Well, live and hope; don't be discouraged; eat with him, and drink with him, and do what he bids thee, and it may be thy reward at last, as well as another's.

[To Y. Fash.] Well, Sir, you must know, I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Y. Fash. I am very much beholden to you.

Coup. You may be, firrah, before the wedding-day yet; the lady is a great heiress, fifteen hundred pounds a year, and a great bag of money; the match is concluded, the writings are drawn, and the pipkin's to be crack'd in a fortnight—Now, you must know, stripling, (with respect to your mother) your brother's the son of a whore.

Y. Fash. Good.

Coup. He has given me a bond of a thousand pounds, for helping him to this fortune, and has promised me as much more, in ready money, upon the day of marriage; which, I understand by a friend, he ne'er designs to pay me. If, therefore, you will be a generous young dog, and secure me five thousand pounds, I'll be a covetous old rogue, and help you to the lady.

Y. Fash. 'Egad, if thou canst bring this about, I'll have thy statue cast in brass. But don't you doat, you old pander you, when you talk at this rate?

Coup. That your youthful parts shall judge of. This plump partridge, that I tell you of, lives in the country, fifty

fifty miles off, with her honoured parents, in a lonely old house, which nobody comes near; she never goes abroad, nor sees company at home. To prevent all misfortunes, she has her breeding within doors; the parson of the parish teaches her to play on the base-viol, the clerk to sing, her nurse to dress, and her father to dance. In short, nobody can give you admittance there but I; nor can I do it any other way, than by asking you pass for your brother.

T. Fals. And how the devil wilt thou do that?

Cous. Without the devil's aid. I warrant thee. Thy brother's face not one of the family ever saw; the whole business has been managed by me, and all the letters go thro' my hands. The last that was writ to Sir Tumbleby Clumsey (for that's the old gentleman's name) was to tell him, his lordship would be down in a fortnight, to consummate. Now, you shall go away immediately, pretend you writ that letter only to have the romantic pleasure of surprising poor mistress; fall desperately in love, as soon as you see her; make that your plea for marrying her immediately; and when the fatigue of the wedding-night's over, you shall send me a swinging parcel of gold, you dog you.

T. Fals. 'Egad, old dad, I'll put my hand in thy bosom now.

Cous. Ah, you young, hot, lusty thief, let me muzzle you. [*Kissing.*] Sirrah, let me muzzle you.

T. Fals. Pshaw! the old lecher—— [*Exit.*]

Cous. Well, I'll warrant thou hast not a farthing of money in thy pocket now; no, one may see it in thy face——

T. Fals. Not a souse, by Jupiter.

Cous. Must I advance, then?—Well first, be at my lodgings in half an hour, and we'll set what may be done. We'll sign and seal, and eat a pullet; and when I have given thee some further instructions, thou shalt hold still, and begone—— [*Kissing.*]——T'other buss; and so, adieu.

T. Fals. Um——Pshaw!

Cous. Ah, you young warm dog you! what a delicious night will the birds have now! [*Exit Cous.*]

T. Fals.

Y. Faß. So, Lory, Providence, thou seest, at last, takes care of men of merit. We are in a fair way to be great people.

Lor. Ay, Sir, if the devil don't step between the cup and the lip, as he uses to do.

Y. Faß. Why, faith, he has played me many a damn'd trick, to spoil my fortune; and, 'egad, I'm almost afraid he's at work about it again now: but if I should tell thee how, thou'dst wonder at me.

Lor. Indeed, Sir, I should not.

Y. Faß. How dost know?

Lor. Because, Sir, I have wondered at you so often, I can wonder at you no more.

Y. Faß. No! What wouldst thou say, if a qualm of conscience should spoil my design?

Lor. I would eat my words, and wonder more than ever.

Y. Faß. Why, faith, Lory, tho' I am a young rakeshell, and have played many a roguish trick, this is so full-grown a cheat, I find I must take pains to come up to it; I have scruples——

Lor. They are strong symptoms of death; if you find they increase, pray, Sir, make your will.

Y. Faß. No, my conscience shan't starve me neither. But thus far I'll hearken to it; before I execute this project, I'll try my brother to the bottom; I'll speak to him with the temper of a philosopher; my reasons (tho' they press him home) shall yet be clothed with so much modesty, not one of all the truths they urge, shall be so naked to offend his sight. If he has yet so much humanity about him, as to assist me, (tho' with a moderate aid) I'll drop my project at his feet, and shew him how I can do for him, much more than what I ask he'd do for me. This one conclusive trial of him I resolve to make——

Succeed or no, still victory's my lot;

If I subdue his heart, 'tis well; if not,

I shall subdue my conscience to my plot.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

Enter Lovelace and Amanda.

LOVELACE.

HOW do you like these lodgings, my dear? For my part, I am so well pleas'd with them, I shall hardly remove whilst we stay in town, if you are satisfied.

Am. I am satisfied with every thing that pleases you; else I had not come to town at all.

Lov. Oh, a little of the noise and bustle of the world sweetens the pleasures of retreat! We shall find the charms of retirement doubled, when we return to it.

Am. That pleasing prospect will be my chiefest entertainment, whilst, much against my will, I am oblig'd to stand surrounded with these empty pleasures, which is so much the fashion to be fond of.

Lov. I am most of them are, indeed, but empty; nay, so empty, that one might wonder by what magic power they act, when they induce us to be vicious for their sake; yet sometimes we may speak kinder of; there are delights, of which a private life is destitute, which may divert an honest man, and be a harmless entertainment to a virtuous woman. The conversation of the town is one; and, truly, (with some small allowances) the plays, I think, may be esteem'd another.

Am. The plays, I must confess, have some small charms; and would have more, would they restrain that loose, obscene encouragement to vice, which shocks, if not the virtue of some women, at least, the modesty of all.

Lov. But, till that reformation can be made, I would not leave the wholesome care, for some interesting tales, that grow among us. Doubtless, the moral of a well-wrought scene is of prevailing force—Last night there happened one that mov'd me strangely.

Am. Pray, what was that?

Lov. Why, 'twas about—but 'tis not worth repeating.

Am. Yes, pray, let me know it.

Lov. No, I think 'tis as well let alone.

Am. Nay, now you make me have a mind to know.

Lov. 'Twas a foolish thing. You'd, perhaps, grow jealous,

jealous, should I tell it you, tho' without a cause, Heaven knows.

Am. I shall begin to think I have cause, if you persist in making it a secret.

Lov. I'll then convince you you have none, by making it no longer so. Know, then, I happened, in the play, to find my very character, only with the addition of a relapse; which struck me so, I put a sudden stop to a most harmless entertainment, which, till then, diverted me between the acts: 'twas to admire the workmanship of nature, in the face of a young lady, that sat at some distance from me; she was so exquisitely handsome—

Am. So exquisitely handsome!

Lov. Why do you repeat my words, my dear?

Am. Because you seemed to speak them with such pleasure, I thought I might oblige you with their echo.

Lov. Then you are alarm'd, Amanda?

Am. It is my duty to be so, when you are in danger.

Lov. You are too quick in apprehending for me. All will be well, when you have heard me out. I do confess I gazed upon her; nay, eagerly I gazed upon her.

Am. Eagerly, that's with desire.

Lov. No, I desired her not. I viewed her with a world of admiration, but not one glance of love.

Am. Take heed of trusting to such nice distinctions.

Lov. I did take heed; for, observing in the play, that he who seemed to represent me there, was, by an accident like this, unwarily surpris'd into a net, in which he lay a poor entangled slave, and brought a train of mischiefs on his head, I snatched my eyes away; they pleaded hard for leave to look again; but I grew absolute, and they obeyed.

Am. Were they the only things that were inquisitive? Had I been in your place, my tongue, I fancy, had been curious too. I should have asked her name, and where she lived (yet still without design:)—Who was she, pray?

Lov. Indeed, I cannot tell.

Am. You will not tell.

Lov. By all that's sacred, then, I did not ask.

Am. Nor do you know what company was with her?

Lov. I do not.

Am.

Am. Then I am calm again.

Low. Why, were you disturb'd?

Am. Had I then no cause?

Low. None, certainly.

Am. I thought I had.

Low. But you thought wrong, Amanda: for, turn the case, and let it be your story; should you come home, and tell me you had seen a handsome man, should I grow jealous, because you had eyes?

Am. But should I tell you he were exquisitely so; that I had gazed on him with admiration; that I had looked with eager eyes upon him; should you not think 'twere possible I might go one step further, and enquire his name?

Low. [*Aside.*] She has reason on her side; I have talk'd too much; but I must turn it off another way. [*To Am.*] Will you then make no difference, Amanda, between the language of our sex and yours? There is a modesty re- strains your tongues, which makes you speak by halves, when you commend; but roving flattery gives a loose to ours, which makes us still speak double what we think. You should not, therefore, in so strict a sense, take what I said to her advantage.

Am. 'Those flights of flattery, Sir, are to our faces only. When women once are out of hearing, you are as modest in your commendations as we are. But I shan't put you to the trouble of farther excuses.' If you please, this business shall rest here. Only give me leave to wish, both for your peace and mine, that you may never meet this miracle of beauty more.

Low. I am content.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, there is a young lady at the door, in a chair, desires to know whether your ladyship sees company. I think her name is Berinthia.

Am. Oh, dear! 'tis a relation I have not seen these five years. Pray her to walk in. [*Exit Servant.*] [*To Low.*] Here's another beauty for you. She was young when I saw her last; but I hear she's grown extremely handsome.

Low. Don't be jealous, now; for I shall gaze upon her too.

Enter

Enter Berinthia.

Ha! By heavens, the very woman! [*Aside.*]

Ber. [*Saluting Amanda.*] Dear Amanda, I did not expect to meet with you in town.

Am. Sweet cousin, I'm overjoyed to see you. [*To Lov.*] Mr. Loveless, here's a relation and a friend of mine, I desire you'll be better acquainted with.

Lov. [*Saluting Ber.*] If my wife never desires a harder thing, Madam, her request will be easily granted.

Ber. [*To Amanda.*] I think, Madam, I ought to wish you joy.

Am. Joy! Upon what?

Ber. Upon your marriage. You were a widow when I saw you last.

Lov. You ought, rather, Madam, to wish me joy upon that, since I am the only gainer.

Ber. If she has got so good a husband as the world reports, she has gained enough to expect the compliment of her friends upon it.

Lov. If the world is so favourable to me, to allow I deserve that title, I hope 'tis so just to my wife, to own I derive it from her.

Ber. Sir, 'tis so just to you both, to own you are, and deserve to be, the happiest pair that live in it.

Lov. I'm afraid we shall lose that character, Madam, whenever you happen to change your condition.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir, my Lord Foppington presents his humble service to you, and desires to know how you do. He but just now heard you were in town. He's at the next door; and, if it be not inconvenient, he'll come and wait upon you.

Lov. Lord Foppington!—I know him not.

Ber. Not his dignity, perhaps, but you do his person. 'Tis Sir Novelty; he has bought a barony, in order to marry a great fortune. His patent has not been passed above eight-and-forty hours, and he has already sent how-do-ye's to all the town, to make them acquainted with his title.

Lov. Give my service to his lordship, and let him know I am proud of the honour he intends me. [*Ex. Ser.* Sure this addition of quality must have so improved this

coxcomb, he can't but be very good company for a quarter of an hour.

Am. Now it moves my pity more than my mirth, to see a man whom nature has made no fool, be so very industrious to pass for an ass.

Lov. No, there you are wrong, Amanda; you should never bestow your pity upon those who take pains for your contempt; pity those whom nature abuses, but never those who abuse nature.

Ber. Besides, the town would be robbed of one of its chiefest diversions, if it should become a crime to laugh at a fool.

Am. I could never yet perceive the town inclined to part with any of its diversions, for the sake of their being crimes; but I have seen it very fond of some, I think, had little else to recommend them.

Ber. I doubt, Amanda, you are grown its enemy, you speak with so much warmth against it.

Am. I must confess, I am not much its friend.

Ber. Then give me leave to make you mine, by not engaging in its quarrel.

Am. You have many stronger claims than that, Berinthia, whenever you think fit to plead your title.

Lov. You have done well to engage a second, my dear; for here comes one will be apt to call you to an account for your country principles.

Enter Lord Foppington.

Lord Fop. [To *Lov.*] Sir, I am your most humble servant.

Lov. I wish you joy, my Lord.

Lord Fop. Oh, Lard, Sir!——Madam, your Ladyship's welcome to tawn.

Am. I wish your Lordship joy.

Lord Fop. Oh, heavens, Madam!——

Lov. My Lord, this young lady is a relation of my wife's.

Lora Fop. [Saluting *ber.*] The beatifullest race of people upon earth, rat me. Dear Loveless, I am overjoyed to see you have brought your family to tawn again: I am, strap my vitals.——[*Aside.*] For I design to lie with your wife——[To *Am.*] Far Gad's sake, Madam, haw has
your

your Ladyship been able to subsist thus long, under the fatigue of a country life?

Aman. My life has been very far from that, my Lord, it has been a very quiet one.

Lord Fop. Why that's the fatigue I speak of, Madam: for 'tis impossible to be quiet, without thinking: now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

Am. Does not your Lordship love reading then?

Lord Fop. Oh, passionately, Madam———But I never think of what I read.

Ber. Why, can your Lordship read without thinking?

Lord Fop. Oh, lard———Can your Ladyship pray without devotion———Madam?

Am. Well, I must own I think books the best entertainment in the world.

Lord Fop. I am so much of your Ladyship's mind, Madam, that I have a private gallery, where I walk sometimes, is furnished with nothing but books and looking-glasses. Madam, I have gilded them, and ranged them so prettily, before gad, it is the most entertaining thing in the world to walk and look upon them.

Am. Nay, I love a neat library too; but 'tis, I think, the inside of a book should recommend it most to us.

Lord Fop. That, I must confess, I am not altogether so fond of: far to my mind the inside of a book, is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now, I think, a man of quality and breeding, may be much diverted with the natural sprouts of his own. But to say the truth, Madam, let a man love reading never so well, when once he comes to know this tawn, he finds so many better ways of passing away the four and twenty hours, that 'twere ten thousand pities he should consume his time in that. For example, Madam, my life; my life, Madam, is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through with such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of them. I rise, Madam, about ten o'clock. I don't rise sooner, because 'tis the worst thing in the world for the complexion; nat that I pretend to be a beau; but a man must endeavour to look wholesome, lest he makes so nauseous a figure in the side-box, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the

play. So at ten o'clock, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find it a good day, I resolve to take a turn in the park, and see the fine women; so huddle on my clothes, and get dressed by one. If it be nasty weather, I take a turn in the chocolate house; where, as you walk, Madam, you have the prettiest prospect in the world: you have looking glasses all around you——But I'm afraid I tire the company.

Ber. Not at all; pray go on.

Lord Fop. Why then, ladies, from thence I go to dinner at Lacket's, and there you are so nicely and delicately served, that, stap my vitals, they can compose you a dish, no bigger than a saucer, shall come to fifty shillings; between eating my dinner, and washing my mouth, ladies, I spend my time, till I go to the play; where, till nine o'clock, I entertain myself with looking upon the company; and usually dispose of one hour more in leading them out. So there's twelve of the four and twenty pretty well over. The other twelve, Madam, are disposed of in two articles: in the first four I toast myself drunk, and in t'other eight I sleep myself sober again. Thus, ladies, you see my life is an eternal raund O of delights.

Love. 'Tis a heavenly one, indeed.

Am. But, my Lord, you beaus spend a great deal of your time in intrigues. You have given us no account of them yet.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] Soh, she would enquire into my amours——That's jealousy——She begins to be in love with me. [*To Aman.*] Why, Madam——as to time for my intrigues, I usually make detachments of it from my other pleasures, according to exigency. Far your Ladyship may please to take notice, that those who intrigue with women of quality, have rarely occasion for above half an hour at a time: people of that rank being under those decorums, they can seldom give you a larger view, than will just serve to shoot them flying. So that the course of my other pleasures is not very much interrupted by my amours.

Love. But your Lordship now is become a pillar of the state; you must attend the weighty affairs of the nation.

Lord Fop. Sir——as to weighty affairs——I leave them

them to weighty heads. I never intend mine shall be a burden to my body.

Love. Oh, but you'll find the house will expect your attendance.

Lord Fop. Sir, you'll find the house will compound for my appearance.

Love. But your friends will take it ill if you don't attend their particular causes.

Lord Fop. Not, Sir, if I come time enough to give them my particular vote.

Ber. But pray, my Lord, how do you dispose of yourself on Sundays? for that, methinks, should hand wretchedly on your hands.

Lord Fop. Why faith, Madam——Sunday—— is a vile day, I must confess; I intend to move for leave to bring in a bill, that players may work upon it, as well as the hackney coaches. Though this I must say for the government, it leaves us the churches to entertain us——But then again, they begin so abominably early, a man must rise by candle-light to get dressed by the psalm.

Ber. Pray, which church does your Lordship most oblige with your presence?

Lord Fop. Oh St. James's, Madam——There's much the best company.

Am. Is there good preaching too?

Lord Fop. Why faith, Madam——I can't tell. A man must have very little to do there, that can give an account of the sermon.

Ber. You can give us an account of the ladies, at least.

Lord Fop. Or I deserve to be excommunicated——There is my Lady Tattle, my Lady Prate, my Lady Titter, my Lady Leer, my Lady Giggle, and my Lady Grin: these sit in the front of the boxes, and all church-time are the prettiest company in the world, stap my vitals. [*To Aman.*] May'not we hope for the honour to see you Ladyship added to our society, Madam?

Am. Alas, my Lord, I am the worst company in the world at church: I'm apt to mind the prayers, or the sermon, or——

Lord Fop. One is indeed strangely apt at church to mind what one should not do. But I hope, Madam, at

one time or other, I shall have the honour to lead your Ladyship to your coach there. [*Aside.*] Methinks she seems strangely pleased with every thing I say to her—'Tis a vast pleasure to receive encouragement from a woman before her husband's face—I have a good mind to pursue my conquest, and speak the thing plainly to her at once—'Egad I'll do't, and that in so cavalier a manner, she shall be surpris'd at it—Ladies, I'll take my leave: I'm afraid I begin to grow troublesome with the length of my visit.

Aman. Your Lordship is too entertaining to grow troublesome any where.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] That now was as much as if she had said—I pray lie with me. I'll let her see I'm quick of apprehension. [*To Aman.*] Oh, lard, Madam, I had like to have forgot a secret, I must needs tell your Ladyship. [*To Love.*] Ned, you must not be so jealous now as to listen.

Love. Not I, my Lord; I'm too fashionable a husband to pry into the secrets of my wife.

Lord Fop. [*To Aman, squeezing her hand.*] I am in love with you to desperation, strike me speechless.

Am. [*Giving him a box o' the ear.*] Then thus I return your passion—An impudent fool!

Lord Fop. Gad's curse, Madam, I'm a peer of the realm.

Love. Hey! what the devil do you affront my wife, Sir? Nay, then—[*They draw and fight. The women run shrieking for help.*]

Am. Ah! What has my folly done? 'Help! Murder! help! Part them, for heaven's sake.'

Lord Fop. [*Falling back, and leaning upon his sword.*] Ah—quite through the body—Stap my vitals.

Enter Servants.

Love. [*Running to him.*] I hope I han't killed the fool however—Bear him up! Where's your wound?

Lord Fop. Just through the guts. -

Love. Call a surgeon there: unbutton him quickly.

Lord Fop. Ay, pray make haste.

Love. This mischief you may thank yourself for.

Lord Fop. I may so—Love's the devil indeed, Ned.

Enter Syringe and Servant.

Serv. Here's Mr. Syringe, Sir, was just going by the door.

Lord Fop. He's the welcomest man alive.

Syr. Stand by, stand by, stand by. Pray, gentlemen, stand by. Lord have mercy upon us! Did you never see a man run through the body before? Pray stand by.

Lord Fop. Ah, Mr. Syringe—I'm a dead man.

Syr. A dead man, and I by—I should laugh to see that, 'egad.

Love. Pr'ythee, don't stand prating, but look upon his wound.

Syr. Why, what if I won't look upon his wound this hour, Sir?

Love. Why then he'll bleed to death, Sir.

Syr. Why then I'll fetch him to life again, Sir.

Love. 'Slife, he's run through the guts, I tell thee.

Syr. Would he were run through the heart, I should get the more credit by his cure. Now I hope you are satisfied?—Come, now let me come at him; now let me come at him. [*Viewing his wound.*] Oons, what a gash is here!—Why, Sir, a man may drive a coach and fix horses into your body.

Lord Fop. Ho——

Syr. Why, what the devil have you run the gentleman through with a scythe?—[*Aside.*] A little prick between the skin and the ribs, that's all.

Love. Let me see his wound.

Syr. Then you shall dress it, Sir; for if any body looks upon it, I won't.

Love. Why, thou art the veriest coxcomb I ever saw.

Syr. Sir, I am not master of my trade for nothing.

Lord Fop. Surgeon!

Syr. Well, Sir.

Lord Fop. Is there any hopes?

Syr. Hopes!——I can't tell——What are you willing to give for your cure?

Lord Fop. Five hundred pounds with pleasure.

Syr. Why then perhaps there may be hopes. But we must avoid further delay. Here, help the gentleman into a chair, and carry him to my house presently, that the properest place, [*Aside.*] to bubble him out of his money

ney. Come, a chair, a chair quickly—There, in with him.

[They put him into a chair.]

Lord Fop. Dear Loveless—Adieu. If I die—I forgive thee; and if I live—I hope thou wilt do as much by me. I am very sorry you and I should quarrel; but I hope here's an end on't, for if you are satisfied—I am.

Love. I shall hardly think it worth my prosecuting any further, so you may be at rest, Sir.

Lord Fop. Thou art a generous fellow, strike me dumb. *[Aside.]* But thou hast an impertinent wife, slap my vitals,

Syr. So, carry him off, carry him off, we shall have him prate himself into a fever by and by; carry him off.

[Exit Servant with Lord Foppington.]

Am. Now on my knees, my dear, let me ask your pardon for my indiscretion, my own I never shall obtain.

Love. Oh, there's no harm done: you served him well.

Am. He did indeed deserve it. But I tremble to think how dear my indiscreet resentment might have cost you.

Love. Oh, no matter, never trouble yourself about that.

Ber. For heaven's sake, what was't he did to you?

Am. Oh, nothing; he only squeezed me kindly by the hand, and frankly offered me a coxcomb's heart. I know I was to blame to resent it as I did, since nothing but a quarrel could ensue. But the fool so surprized me with his insolence, I was not mistress of my fingers.

Ber. Now I dare swear he thinks you had them at great command, they obeyed you so readily.

Enter Worthy.

Wor. Save you, save you, good people; I'm glad to find you all alive; I met a wounded peer carrying off: for heaven's sake what was the matter?

Love. Oh, a trifle! he would have lain with my wife before my face, so she obliged him with a box of the ear, and I run him through the body: that was all.

Wor. Bagatelle on all sides. But, pray, Madam, how long has this noble lord been an humble servant of yours?

Am. This is the first I have heard on't. So, I suppose, his quality, more than his love, has brought him into this

this adventure. He thinks his title an authentic passport to every woman's heart, below the degree of a peeress.

Wor. He's coxcomb enough to think any thing. But I would not have you brought into trouble for him: I hope there's no danger of his life?

Love. None at all: he's fallen into the hands of a roguish surgeon, who, I perceive, designs to frighten a little money out of him. But I saw his wound, 'tis nothing; he may go to the play to-night, if he pleases.

Wor. I'm glad you have corrected him without farther mischief. And now, Sir, if these ladies have no farther service for you, you'll oblige me if you can go to the place I spoke to you of t'other day.

Low. With all my heart. [*Aside.*] Tho' I could wish, methinks, to stay and gaze a little longer on that creature. Good gods! how beautiful she is—But what have I to do with beauty? I have already had my portion, and must not covet more. Come, Sir, when you please.
[*To Wor.*]

Wor. Ladies, your servant.

Am. Mr. Loveless, pray one word with you before you go.

Low. '[*To Wor.*] I'll overtake you, Sir.' What would my dear? [*Exit Worthy.*]

Am. Only a woman's foolish question. How do you like my cousin here?

Low. Jealous already, Amanda?

Am. Not at all; I ask you for another reason.

Low. [*Aside.*] Whate'er her reason be, I must not tell her true. [*To Aman.*] Why, I confess she's handsome. But you must not think I slight your kinswoman, if I own to you, of all the women who may claim that character, she is the last would triumph in my heart.

Am. I'm satisfied.

Low. Now tell me why you ask'd?

Am. At night I will. Adieu.

Low. I'm yours. [*Kissing her.*] [*Exit Low.*]

Am. [*Aside.*] I'm glad to find he does not like her; for I have a great mind to persuade her to come and live with me. [*To Ber.*] Now, dear Berinthia, let me enquire a little into your affairs: for I do assure you, I am
enough

enough your friend, to interest myself in every thing that concerns you.

Ber. You formerly have given me such proofs on't, I should be very much to blame to doubt it; I am sorry I have no secrets to trust you with, that I might convince you how entire a confidence I durst repose in you.

Am. Why is it possible, that one so young and beautiful as you, shou'd live and have no secrets?

Ber. What secrets do you mean?

Am. Lovers.

Ber. O twenty; but not one secret one amongst 'em. Lovers in this age have too much honour to do any thing under-hand; they do all above-board.

Am. That now, methinks, would make me hate a man.

Ber. But the women of the town are of another mind: for by this means a lady may (with the expence of a few coquet glances) lead twenty fools about in a string, for two or three years together. Whereas, if she should allow 'em greater favours, and oblige them to secrecy, she would not keep one of 'em a fortnight.

Am. There's something indeed in that to satisfy the vanity of a woman; but I can't comprehend how the men find their account in it.

Ber. Their entertainment, I must confess, is a riddle to me: for there's very few of them ever get farther than a bow and an ogle. I have half a score for my share, who follow me all over the town; and at the play, the Park, and the church, do (with their eyes) say the violent'st things to me—But I never hear any more of 'em.

Am. What can be the reason of that?

Ber. One reason is, they don't know how to go farther. They have had so little practice, they don't understand the trade. But besides their ignorance, you must know, there is not one of my half score lovers, but what follows half a score mistresses. Now their affections being divided amongst so many, are not strong enough for any one, to make 'em pursue her to the purpose. Like a young puppy in a warren, they have a flirt at all, and catch none.

Am.

Am. Yet they seem to have a torrent of love to dispose of.

Ber. They have so : but 'tis like the river of a modern philosopher (whose works, tho' a woman, I have read) it sets out with a violent stream, splits in a thousand branches, and is all lost in the sands.

Am. But do you think this river of love runs all its course without doing any mischief ? Do you think it overflows nothing ?

Ber. O yes ; 'tis true, it never breaks into any body's ground that has the least fence about it ; but overflows all the commons that lie in its way. And this is the utmost achievement of those dreadful champions in the field of love—the beau.

Am. But pr'ythee, Berinthia, instruct me a little farther ; for I am so great a novice, I'm almost ashamed on't. My husband's leaving me whilst I was young and fond, threw me into that depth of discontent, that ever since I have led so private and recluse a life, my ignorance is scarce conceivable. I therefore fain wou'd be instructed : not (Heaven knows) that what you call intrigues have any charms for me : the practic part of all unlawful love is——

Ber. O 'tis abominable : but for the speculative ; that we must all confess, is entertaining. The conversation of all the virtuous women in the town turns upon that and new clothes.

Am. Pray be so just then to me, to believe, 'tis with a world of innocency I would enquire, whether you think those women we call women of reputation, do really 'scape all other men, as they do those shadows of 'em, the beaus.

Ber. O no, Amanda : there a sort of men make dreadful work amongst 'em : men that may be called, the beaus antipathy ; for they agree in nothing but walking upon two legs. These have brains : the beau has none. These are in love with their mistress : the beau with himself. They take care of her reputation : he's industrious to destroy it. They are decent : he's a fop. They are men : he's an ass.

Am. If this be their character, I fancy we had here e'en now a pattern of 'em both.

Ber.

Ber. His Lordship and Mr. Worthy.

Am. The same.

Ber. As for the Lord he's eminently so : and for the other, I can assure you, there's not a man in town who has a better interest with the women, that are worth having an interest with. But 'tis all private : ' he's like a back-stair minister at court, who, whilst the reputed favourites are sauntering in the bed-chamber, is ruling the roast in the closet.

Am. ' He answers then the opinion I had ever of him. Heaven's ! what a difference there is between a man like him, and that vain nauseous fop, Sir Novelty. *[Taking her hand.]* I must acquaint you with a secret, cousin ; 'tis not that fool alone has talk'd to me of love, Worthy has been tampering too : 'tis true, he has done it in vain : not all his charms or art have power to shake me. My love, my duty, and my virtue, are such faithful guards, I need not fear my heart should e'er betray me. But what I wonder at is this : I find I did not start at his proposal, as when it came from one whom I contemn'd. ' I therefore mention this attempt, that I may learn from you whence it proceeds ; that vice, which cannot change its nature, should so far change at least its shape, as that the self-same crime proposed from one shall seem a monster gaping at your ruin, when from another it shall look so kind, as tho' it were your friend, and never meant to harm you.' Whence think you, can this difference proceed ? For 'tis not love, Heaven knows.

Ber. O no ; I wou'd not for the world believe it were. But possibly, should there a dreadful sentence pass upon you, to undergo the rage of both their passions ; the pain you apprehend from one might seem so trivial to the other, the danger would not quite so much alarm you.

Am. Fy, fy, Berinthia, you would indeed alarm me, could you incline me to a thought, that all the merit of mankind combined, could shake that tender love I bear my husband : no, he sits triumphant in my heart, and nothing can dethrone him.

Ber. But should he abdicate again, do you think you should preserve the throne ten tedious winters more, in hopes of his return ?

Am.

Am. Indeed I think he should, Tho' I confess, after those obligations he has to me, should he abandon me once more, my heart would grow extremely urgent with me to root him thence, and cast him out for ever.

Ber. Were I that thing they call a slighted wife, some body should run the risque of being that thing they call—a husband.

Am. O fy, Berinthia, no revenge should ever be taken against a husband; but to wrong his bed is a vengeance, which of all vengeance—

Ber. Is the sweetest, ha, ha, ha! Don't I talk madly?

Am. Madly, indeed.

Ber. Yet I'm very innocent.

Am. That I dare swear you are. I know how to make allowances for your humour: You were always very entertaining company; but I find since marriage and widowhood have shewn you the world a little, you are very much improved.

Ber. [*Aside.*] Alack-a-day, there has gone more than that to improve me, if she knew all.

Am. For Heaven's sake, Berinthia, tell me what way I shall take to persuade you to come and live with me?

Ber. Why, one way in the world there is—and but one:

Am. Pray which is that?

Ber. It is to assure me—I shall be very welcome.

Am. If that be all, you shall e'en lie here to-night.

Ber. To-night?

Am. Yes, to-night.

Ber. Why, the people where I lodge will think me mad.

Am. Let 'em think what they please.

Ber. Say you so, Amanda? Why then they shall think what they please: for I'm a young widow, and I care not what any body thinks. Ah, Amanda! it's a delicious thing to be a young widow.

Am. You'll hardly make me think so.

Ber. Phu, because you are in love with your husband: but that is not every woman's case.

Am. I hope 'twas yours at least.

Ber. Mine, say ye? Now I have a great mind to tell you a lie, but I should do it so awkwardly, you'd find me out.

Am. Then e'en speak the truth.

Ber. Shall I?—Then, after all, I did love him, Amanda—as a nun does penance.

Am. Why did not you refuse to marry him then?

Ber. Because my mother would have whipped me.

Am. How did you live together?

Ber. Like man and wife—afunder. He lov'd the country, I the town; he hawks and hounds, I coaches and equipage; he eating and drinking, I carding and playing; he the sound of a horn, I the squeak of a fiddle; we were dull company at table, worse a-bed: Whenever we met, we gave one another the spleen; and never agreed but once, which was about lying alone.

Am. But tell me one thing truly and sincerely.

Ber. What's that?

Am. Notwithstanding all these jars, did not his death at last, extremely trouble you?

Ber. O yes: 'not that my present pangs were so very violent, but the after-pains were intolerable.' I was forced to wear a beastly widow's band a twelvemonth for't.

Am. Women, I find, have different inclinations.

Ber. Women, I find, keep different company. When your husband ran away from you, if you had fallen into some of my acquaintance, 'twou'd have sav'd you many a tear: But you go and live with a grandmother, a bishop, and an old nurse, which was enough to make any woman break her heart for her husband. Pray, Amanda, if ever you are a widow again, keep yourself so, as I do.

Am. Why, do you then resolve you'll never marry?

Ber. O no; I resolve I will.

Am. How so?

Ber. That I never may.

Am. You banter me.

Ber. Indeed I don't. But I consider I'm a woman, and form my resolutions accordingly.

Am. Well, my opinion is, form what resolution you will, matrimony will be the end on't.

Ber.

Ber. Faith it won't.

Am. How do you know?

Ber. I'm sure on't.

Am. Why, do you think 'tis impossible for you to fall in love?

Ber. No.

Am. Nay, but to grow so passionately fond, that nothing but the man you love can give you rest.

Ber. Well, what then?

Am. Why, then you'll marry him.

Ber. How do you know that?

Am. Why, what can you do else?

Ber. Nothing—but sit and cry.

Am. Psha!

Ber. Ah, poor Amanda, you have led a country life: but if you'll consult the widows of this town they'll tell you, you should never take a lease of a house you can hire for a quarter's warning. [Exeunt.]

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

Enter Lord Foppington and Servant.

LORD FOPPINGTON.

HHEY, fellow, let the coach come to the door.

Serv. Will your lordship venture so soon to expose yourself to the weather?

Lord Fop. Sir, I will venture as soon as I can, to expose myself to the ladies: 'tho' give me my cloak however; for in that side-bax, what between the air that comes in at the door on one side, and the intolerable warmth of the masks on t'other, a man gets so many heats and colds, 'twou'd destroy the constitution of a horse.

Serv. '[Putting on his cloak.]' I wish your lordship would please to keep house a little longer; I'm afraid your honour does not well consider your wound.

Lord Fop. My wound!—I would not be in eclipse another day, tho' I had as many wounds in my guts as I have had in my heart.

Enter Young Fashion.

Y. Fash. Brother, your servant. How do you find yourself to-day?

Lord Fop. So well, that I have arder'd my coach to the door. So there's no great danger of death this baut, Tam.

Y. Fash. I'm very glad of it.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] That I believe's a lie. Pr'ythee, Tam, tell me one thing; did not your heart cut a caper up to your mauth, when you heard I was run thro' the bady?

Y. Fash. Why do you think it should?

Lord Fop. Because I remember mine did so, when I heard my father was slat thro' the head.

Y. Fash. It then did very ill.

Lord Fop. Pr'ythee, why so?

Y. Fash. Because he us'd you very well.

Lord Fop. Well!—naw strike me dumb, he starv'd me. He has let me want a thausand women for want of a thausand paund.

Y. Fash. Then he hindered you from making a great many ill bargains; for I think no woman is worth money that will take money.

Lord Fop. If I were a younger brother, I should think so too.

Y. Fash. Why, is it possible you can value a woman that's to be bought?

Lord Fop. Pr'ythee, why not as well as a pad-nag?

Y. Fash. Because a woman has a heart so dispose of; a horse has none.

Lord Fop. Look you, Tam, of all things that belong to a woman, I have an aversion to her heart; for when once a woman has given you her heart—you can never get rid of the rest of her bady.

Y. Fash. This is strange doctrine: but pray, in your amours how is it with you own heart?

Lord Fop. Why, my heart in my amours—is like—my heart apt. of my amours; *od la, glaze.* My bady, Tam, is a watch; and my heart is the pendulum to it; whilst the finger runs round to every hour in the circle, that still beats the same time.

Y. Fash. Then you are seldom much in love?

Lord

Lord Fop. Never, flap my vitals.

T. Fash. Why then did you make all this bustle about Amanda?

Lord Fop. Because she was a woman of an insolent virtue, and I thought myself piqu'd in honour to debauch her.

T. Fash. Very well. [*Aside.*] Here's a rare fellow for you, to have the spending of five thousand pounds a-year. But now for my business with him. [*To Lord Fop.*] Brother, tho' I know to talk of business (especially of money) is a theme not quite so entertaining to you as that of the ladies, my necessities are such, I hope you'll have patience to hear me.

Lord Fop. The greatness of your necessities, Tam, is the worst argument in the world for your being patiently heard. I do believe you are going to make a very good speech, but, strike me dumb, it has the worst beginning of any speech I have heard this twelvemonth.

T. Fash. I'm very sorry you think so.

Lord Fop. I do believe thou art. But come, let's know thy affair quickly; for 'tis a new play, and I shall be so rumpled and squeezed with pressing thro' the crowd, to get to my servant, the women will think I have lain all night in my clothes.

T. Fash. Why then (that I may not be the author of so great a misfortune) my case in a word is this. The necessary expences of my travels have so much exceeded the wretched income of my annuity, that I have been forced to mortgage it for five hundred pounds, which is spent; so that unless you are so kind to assist me in redeeming it, I know no remedy but to take a purse.

Lord Fop. Why faith, Tam—to give you my sense of the thing, I do think taking a purse the best remedy in the world; for if you succeed, you are relieved that way; if you are taken—you are relieved t'other.

T. Fash. I'm glad to see you are in so pleasant a humour, I hope I shall find the effects on't.

Lord Fop. Why, do you then really think it a reasonable thing I shou'd give you five hundred pounds?

T. Fash. I do not ask it as a due, brother, I am willing to receive it as a favour.

Lord Fop. Thou art willing to receive it in any law, strike me speechless. But these are damped times to give money in : taxes are so great, repairs so exorbitant, servants such rogues, and periwigs so dear, that the devil take me, I am reduced to that extremity in my cash, I have been forc'd to retrench in that one article of sweet powder, till I have brought it down to five guineas a month. Now judge, Tam, whether I can spare you five hundred pounds ?

T. Fash. If you can't, I must starve, that's all. [*Aside.*] Damn him.

Lord Fop. All I can say is, you should have been a better husband.

T. Fash. Oons, if you can't live upon five thousand a year, how do you think I should do't upon two hundred ?

Lord Fop. Don't be in a passion, Tam ; for passion is the most unbecoming thing in the world—to the face. Look you, I don't love to say any thing to you to make you melancholy ; but upon this occasion I must take leave to put you in mind, that a running horse does require more attendance than a coach-horse. Nature has made some difference 'twixt you and I.

T. Fash. Yes, she has made you older. [*Aside.*] Fox take her.

Lord Fop. That is nat all, Tam.

T. Fash. Why what is there else ?

Lord Fop. [*Looking first upon himself, then upon his daughter.*]—Ask the ladies.

T. Fash. Why, thou essence bottle ! thou musk-cat ! dost thou then think thou hast any advantage over me, but what fortune has given thee ?

Lord Fop. I do——slap my vitals.

T. Fash. Now, by all that's great and powerful, thou art the prince of coxcombs.

Lord Fop. Sir——I am praud of being at the head of so prevailing a party.

T. Fash. Will nothing then provoke thee ?——Draw, coward.

Lord Fop. Look you, Tam, you know I have always taken you for a mighty dull fellow, and here is one of the foolishhest plats broke out, that I have seen a long time.

time. Your poverty makes your life so burdensome to you, you would provoke me to a quarrel, in hopes either to slip thro' my lungs into my estate, or to get yourself run thro' the guts, to put an end to your pain. But I will disappoint you in both your designs; for with the temper of a philosopher, and the discretion of a statesman — I will go to the play with my sword in my scabbard.

[Exit.]

F. Fash. So! Farewel, snuff-box. And now, conscience, I defy thee. Lory!

[Enter Lory.]

Lory. Sir.

F. Fash. Here's rare news, Lory; his lordship has given me a pill has purged off all my scruples.

Lory. Then my heart's at ease again: for I have been in a lamentable fright, Sir, ever since your conscience had the impudence to intrude into your company.

F. Fash. Be at peace, it will come there no more: my brother has given it a wing by the nose, and I have kicked it down stairs. Set on away to the inn; get the horses ready quickly, and bring them to old Coupler's, without a moment's delay.

Lory. Then, Sir, you are going straight about the fortune.

F. Fash. I am away; fly, Lory.

Lory. The happiest day I ever saw. I'm upon the wing already. *[Exit Lory.]*

SCENE, a Garden.

[Enter Lovelace and a Servant.]

Lov. Is my wife within?

Serv. No, Sir, she has been gone out this half-hour.

Lov. Do well; leave me.

• Sure, Fate has yet some business to be done,

• Before Amanda's heart and mine misrest;

• Else, why amongst those legions of her sex,

• Which throng the world,

• Should she pick out for her companion

• The only one on earth

• Whom Nature has endowed for her undoing?

• Undoing was't, I said — Who shall undo her?

• Is not her empire fix'd? Am I not hers?

• Did

' Did she not rescue me, a groveling slave;
 ' When chain'd and bound by that black tyrant Vice,
 ' I labour'd in its vilest drudgery?
 ' Did she not ransom me, and set me free?
 ' Nay more:
 ' When by my follies sunk
 ' To a poor tatter'd despicable beggar,
 ' Did she not lift me up to envy'd fortune,
 ' Give me herself, and all that she possess'd,
 ' Without a thought of more return,
 ' Than what a poor repenting heart might make her?
 ' Has't she done this? And if she has,
 ' Am I not strongly bound to love her for it?
 ' To love her—Why, do I not love her then?
 ' By earth and Heaven I do.
 ' Nay, I have demonstration that I do:
 ' For I would sacrifice my life to serve her.
 ' Yet hold—if laying down my life
 ' Be demonstration of my love,
 ' What is't I feel in favour of Berinthia?
 ' For should she be in danger, methinks, I could incline
 ' To risk it for her service too; and yet I do not love
 ' How then subsists my proof?—— [her.
 ' ——O, I have found it out.
 ' What I would do for one, is demonstration of my love;
 ' and if I'd do as much for t'other, it there is demonstra-
 ' tion of my friendship——Ay——it must be so.
 ' I find I'm very much her friend.—Yet let me ask my-
 ' self one puzzling question more: Whence springs
 ' this mighty friendship all at once? For our acquaint-
 ' tance is of a later date. Now friendship's said to be a
 ' plant of tedious growth, its root composed of tender
 ' fibres, nice in their taste, cautious in spreading, check-
 ' ed with the least corruption in the soil, long ere it
 ' take, and longer still ere it appear to do so: whilst
 ' mine is in a moment shot so high, and fixed so fast, it
 ' seems beyond the power of storms to shake it: I doubt
 ' it thrives too fast. [Mus'g.

Enter Berinthia.

—Ah, she here!—Nay, then take heed, my heart, for there are dangers towards.

Ber.

Ber. What makes you look so thoughtful, Sir? I hope you are not ill.

Low. I was debating, Madam, whether I was for or not; and that was it which made me look so thoughtful.

Ber. Is it then so hard a matter to decide? I thought all people had been acquainted with their own bodies, tho' few people know their own minds.

Low. What if the distemper I suspect be in the mind?

Ber. Why then I'll undertake to prescribe you a cure.

Low. Alas! you undertake you know not what.

Ber. So far at least then allow me to be a physician.

Low. Nay, I'll allow you so yet farther: for I have reason to believe, should I put myself into your hands, you would increase my distemper.

Ber. Perhaps I might have reasons from the college not to be too quick in your cure; for 'tis possible, I might find ways to give you often ease, Sir.

Low. Were I but sure of that, I'd quickly lay my case before you.

Ber. Whether you are sure of it or no, what risk do you run in trying?

Low. O, a very great one.

Ber. How?

Low. You might betray my distemper to my wife.

Ber. And so lose all my practice.

Low. Will you then keep my secret?

Ber. I will, if it don't hurt me.

Low. Swear.

Ber. I do.

Low. By what?

Ber. By woman.

Low. That's swearing by my dcity. Do it by your own, or I shan't believe you.

Ber. By man then.

Low. I'm satisfied. Now hear my symptoms, and give me your advice. The first were these:

When 'twas my chance to see you at the play,
A random glance you throw, at first alarm'd me,
I could not turn my eyes from whence the danger came:
I gazed upon you, till you shot again,
And then my fears came on me;

My

My heart began to pant, my limbs to tremble,
My blood grew thin, my pulse beat quick,
My eyes grew hot and dim, and all the frame of nature
Shook with apprehension.

'Tis true, some small recruits of resolution.

My manhood brought to my assistance,
And by their help I made a stand awhile,
But found at last your arrows flew so thick,
They could not fail to pierce me ;

So left the field,

And fled for shelter to Amanda's arms.

What think you of these symptoms, pray ?

Ber. Feverish every one of 'em.

But what relief pray did your wife afford you ?

Lov. Why ' instantly she let me blood which,' for
the present much assuaged my flame. But when I saw
you, out it burst again, and raged with greater fury than
before. Nay, since you now appear, 'tis so increased,
that in a moment, if you do not help me, I shall, whilst
you look on, consume to ashes.

[*Taking hold of her hand.*

Ber. [*Breaking from him.*] O lard, let me go ; 'tis the
plague, and we shall all be infected.

Lov. [*Catching her in his arms, and kissing her.*] Then
we'll die together, my charming angel.

Ber. O ged—the devil's in you. Lord, let me go,
here's somebody coming.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady 'is come home, and' desires to
speak with you ; she's in her chamber.

Lov. Tell her, I'm coming.

[*Exit Serv.*

But before I go, one glass of nectar more to drink her
health.

Ber. Stand off, or I shall hate you, by Heavens.

Lov. [*Kissing her.*] In matters of love, a woman's
oath is no more to be minded than a man's.

Ber. Um——

Enter Worthy.

Wor. Ha ! what's here ? my 'old' mistress, and so
close, i'faith ! I would not spoil her sport for the uni-
verse.

[*He retires.*

Ber.

Ber. O ged——Now do I pray to Heaven, [*Exit Loveless, running.*] with all my heart and soul, that the devil in hell may take me, if ever—I was better pleased in my life—This man has bewitched me, that's certain. [*Sighing.*] 'Well, I am condemn'd, but thanks to Heaven, I feel myself each moment more and more prepared for my execution. Nay, to that degree, I don't perceive I have the least fear of dying. No, I find, let the executioner be but a man, and there's nothing will suffer with more resolution than a woman. Well, I never had but one intrigue yet; but, I confess, I long to have another. Pray Heaven it end as the first did tho', that we may both grow weary at a time; for 'tis a melancholy thing for lovers to outlive one another.'

Enter Worthy.

Wor. [*Aside.*] This discovery's a lucky one, I hope to make a happy use on't. That gentlewoman there is no fool; so I shall be able to make her understand her interest. [*To Ber.*] Your servant, Madam; I need not ask you how you do, you have got so good a colour.

Ber. No better than I used to have, I suppose.

Wor. A little more blood in your cheeks.

Ber. The weather's hot.

Wor. If it were not, a woman may have a colour.

Ber. What do you mean by that?

Wor. Nothing.

Ber. Why do you smile then?

Wor. Because the weather's hot.

Ber. You'll never leave roguing, I see that.

Wor. [*Putting his finger to his nose.*] You'll never leave—I see that.

Ber. Well, I can't imagine what you drive at. Pray tell me what you mean?

Wor. Do you tell me, it's the same thing?

Ber. I can't.

Wor. Guess!

Ber. I shall guess wrong.

Wor. Indeed you won't.

Ber. Psha! either tell, or let it alone.

Wor. Nay, rather than let it alone, I will tell. But first I must put you in mind, that after what has past
'twixt

'twixt you and I, very few things ought to be secrets between us.

Ber. Why, what secrets do we hide? I know of none.

Wor. Yes, there are two; one I have hid from you, and t'other you would hide from me: You are fond of Loveless, which I have discovered; and I am fond of his wife——

Ber. Which I have discovered.

Wor. Very well, now I confess your discovery to be true: what do you say to mine?

Ber. Why, I confess——I would swear 'twere false, if I thought you were fool enough to believe me.

Wor. Now am I almost in love with you again. Nay, I don't know but I might be quite so, had I made one short campaign with Amanda. Therefore, if you find 'twould tickle your vanity, to bring me down once more to your lure, e'en help me quickly to dispatch her business, that I may have nothing else to do, but to apply myself to yours.

Ber. Do you then think, Sir, I am old enough to be a bawd?

Wor. 'No,' but I think you are wise enough to——

Ber. To do what?

Wor. To hoodwink Amanda with a gallant, that she mayn't see who is her husband's mistress.

Ber. [*Aside.*] He has reason: the hint's a good one.

Wor. Well, Madam, what think you on't?

Ber. I think you are so much a deeper politician in these affairs than I am, that I ought to have a very great regard to your advice.

Wor. Then give me leave to put you in mind, that the most easy, safe, and pleasant situation for your own amour; is the house in which you now are; provided you keep Amanda from any sort of suspicion. That the way to do that, is to engage her in an intrigue of her own, making yourself her confident. And the way to bring her to intrigue, is to make her jealous of her husband in a wrong place; which the more you foment, the less you'll be suspected. This is my scheme, in short; which if you follow, as you should do, (my dear Berinthia) we may all four pass the winter very pleasantly.

Ber.

Ber. Well, I could be glad to have no body's sins to answer for but my own. But where there is a necessity—

Wor. Right, as you say, where there is a necessity, a Christian is bound to help his neighbour.' So, good Berinthia, lose no time, but let us begin the dance as fast as we can.

Ber. Not till the fiddles are in tune, pray Sir. 'Your lady's strings will be very apt to fly, I can tell you that, if they are wound up too hastily. But if you'll have patience to skrew them to a pitch by degrees, I don't doubt but she may endure to be played upon.

Wor. Ay, and will make admirable music too, or I'm mistaken;' but have you had no private closet discourse with her yet about males and females, and so forth, which may give you hopes in her constitution! for I know her morals are the devil against us.

Ber. I have had so much discourse with her, that I believe were she once cured of her fondness to her husband, the fortress of her virtue would not be so impregnable as she fancies.

Wor. What! she runs, I'll warrant you, into that common mistake of fond wives, who conclude themselves virtuous, because they can refuse a man they don't like, when they have got one they do.

Ber. True, and therefore I think 'tis a presumptuous thing in a woman to assume the name of virtuous, till she has heartily hated her husband, and been soundly in love with somebody else; whom, if she has withstood—then—much good may it do her.

Wor. Well, so much for her virtue. Now, one word of her inclinations, and every one to their post. What opinion do you find she has of me?

Ber. What you could wish; she thinks you handsome and discreet.

Wor. Good, that's thinking half seas over. One tide more brings us into port.

Ber. Perhaps it may, though still remember, there's a difficult bar to pass.

Wor. I know there is, but I don't question I shall get well over it, by the help of such a pilot.

Ber. You may depend upon your pilot, she'll do the
E best

best she can; so weigh anchor and be gone as soon as you please.

Wor. I'm under sail already. Adieu. [*Exit Wor.*]

Ber. [*Alone.*] *Bon Voyage.* So, here's fine work. What a business have I undertaken? I'm a very pretty gentlewoman truly; but there was no avoiding it: he'd have ruined me, if I had refused him. ' Besides, faith, I begin to fancy there may be as much pleasure in carrying on another body's intrigue, as one's own. This at least is certain; it exercises almost all the entertaining faculties of a woman: for there's employment for hypocrisy, invention, deceit, flattery, mischief, and lying.

Enter Amanda, her Woman following her.

Wom. If you please, Madam, only to say, whether you'll have me buy them or not.

Am. Yes; no; go fiddle; I care not what you do. Pr'ythee leave me.

Wom. I have done. [*Exit Woman.*]

Ber. What in the name of Jove's the matter with you?

Am. The matter, Berinthia! I'm almost mad, I'm plagued to death.

Ber. Who is it that plagues you?

Am. Who do you think should plague a wife, but her husband?

Ber. Oh, ho, is it come to that? We shall have you with yourself a widow by and by.

Am. Would I were any thing but what I am; a base ungrateful man, after what I have done for him, to use me thus!

Ber. What, he has been ogling now, I'll warrant you?

Am. Yes, he has been ogling.

Ber. And so you are jealous? Is that all?

Am. That all! Is jealousy then nothing?

Ber. It should be nothing, if I were in your case.

Am. Why, what would you do?

Ber. I'd cure myself.

Am. How?

Ber. ' Let blood in the fond vein: ' care as little for my husband, as he did for me.

Am. That would not stop his course.

Ber. Nor nothing else, when the wind's in the warm corner. Look you, Amanda, you may build castles in the air, ' and fume, and fret, and grow thin and lean, ' and

THE REELAPSE.

31

‘ and pale and ugly, if you please.’ But I tell you, no man worth having is true to his wife, or can be true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.

Am. Do you then really think he’s false to me? for I did not suspect him.

Ber. Think so! I know he’s so.

Am. Is it possible? Pray tell me what you know?

Ber. Don’t press me then to name names; for that I have sworn I won’t do.

Am. Well, I won’t; but let me know all you can without perjury.

‘ *Ber.* I’ll let you know enough to prevent any wise woman’s dying of the pipp; and, I hope, you’ll pluck up your spirits, and shew, upon occasion, you can be as good a wife as the best of them.

‘ *Am.* Well, what a woman can do I’ll endeavour.

‘ *Ber.* Oh, a woman can do a great deal, if once she sets her mind to it. Therefore, pray don’t stand trifling any longer, and teasing yourself with this and that, and your love and your virtue, and I know not what: but resolve to hold up your head, get a tiptoe, and look over them all; for, to my certain knowledge, your husband is a pickeering elsewhere.

‘ *Am.* You are sure on’t?’

Ber. Positively; he fell in love at the play.

Am. Right, the very same; do you know the ugly thing?

Ber. Yes, I know her well enough; but she’s no such ugly thing neither.

Am. Is she very handsome?

Ber. Truly I think so.

Am. Hey ho!

Ber. What do you sigh for now?

Am. Oh, my heart!

‘ *Ber.* [*Aside.*] Only the pangs of nature! she’s in labour of her love; heaven send her a quick delivery, I’m sure she has a good midwife.

‘ *Am.* I’m very ill, I must go to my chamber. Dear Berinthia, don’t leave me a moment.

Ber. No, don’t fear. [*Aside.*] I’ll see you safe brought to bed, I’ll warrant you.

[*Exit Amanda leaning upon Berinthia.*]

E 1

SCENE,

SCENE, a Country-House.

Enter Young Fashion and Lory.

Young Fash. So, here's our inheritance, Lory, if we can but get into possession. But, methinks, the seat of our family looks like Noah's ark, as if the chief part on't were designed for the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field.

Lory. Pray, Sir, don't let your head run upon the orders of building here; get but the heiress, let the devil take the house.

Young Fash. Get but the house, let the devil take the heiress, I say; at least if she be as old Coupler describes her. But come, we have no time to squander. Knock at the door. [*Lory knocks two or three times.*] What the devil, have they got no ears in this house? Knock harder.

Lory. 'Egad, Sir, this will prove some enchanted castle; we shall have the giant come out by and by with his club, and beat our brains out. [*Knocks again.*]

Young Fash. Hush; they come.

From within.] Who is there?

Lory. Open the door and see: is that your country breeding?

Within.] Ay, but two words to a bargain: Tummiss, is the blunderbuss primed?

Young Fash. 'Oons, give them good words, Lory; we shall be shot here a fortune-catching.

Lory. 'Egad, Sir, I think y'are in the right on't. Ho, Mr. What d'ye-call-um.—[*Servant appears at the window with a blunderbuss.*]

Ser. Weal naw, what's yare business.

Young Fash. Nothing, Sir, but to wait upon Sir Tunbelly, with your leave.

Ser. To weat upon Sir Tunbelly? Why, you'll find that's just as Sir Tunbelly pleases.

Young Fash. But will you do me the favour, Sir, to know whether Sir Tunbelly pleases or not?

Ser. Why, look you, do you see, with good words much may be done. Ralph, go thy waes, and ask Sir Tunbelly, if he pleases to be waited upon. And, do'st hear? Caull to nurse, that she may lock up Miss Hoyden before the geat's open.

Young Fash. D'ye hear that, Lory?

Lory.

' *Lory.* Ay, Sir, I'm afraid we shall find a difficult job on't. Pray heaven, that old rogue, Coupler, han't sent us to fetch milk out of the gunroom.—

' *Young Fash.* I'll warrant thee all will go well: see, the door opens.'

Enter Sir Tunbelly, with his servants armed with guns, clubs, pitchforks, scythes, &c.

' *Lory.* [*Running behind his master.*] Oh, lord, Oh, lord, Oh, lord, we are both dead men.

' *Young Fash.* Take heed, fool; thy fear will ruin us.

' *Lory.* My fear, Sir; 'Ideath, Sir, I fear nothing: [*Aside.*] Would I were well up to the chin in a horse-pond.'

Sir Tun. Who is it here has any business with me?

Young Fash. Sir, 'tis I, if your name be Sir Tunbelly Clumfey.

Sir Tun. Sir, my name is Sir Tunbelly Clumfey, whether you have any business with me or not. So you see I am not ashamed of my name—nor my face—neither.

Young Fash. Sir, you have no cause, that I know of.

Sir Tun. Sir, if you have no cause neither, I desire to know who you are; for till I know your name, I shall not ask you to come into my house, and when I know your name—'tis fix to four I don't ask you neither.

Young Fash. [*Giving him a letter.*] Sir, I hope you'll find this letter an authentic passport.

Sir Tun. Cod's my life, I ask your Lordship's pardon ten thousand times. [*To his servants.*] Here, run in doors quickly: get a Scotch-coal fire in the great parlour; set all the Turkey-work-chairs in their places; get the great brass candlesticks out, and be sure stick the sockets full of laurel: run. [*Turning to Young Fashion.*] My Lord, I ask your Lordship's pardon. [*To other Servants.*] And do you hear, run away to nurse, bid her let Miss Hoyden loose again; and if it was not thising day, let her put on a clean tucker, quick. [*Exeunt Servants confusedly.*] [*To Young Fashion.*] I hope your honour will excuse the disorder of my family, we are not used to receive men of your Lordship's great quality every day. Pray where are your coaches and servants, my Lord?

Young Fash. Sir, that I might give you and your fair daughter a proof how impatient I am to be nearer a king,

to you, I left my equipage to follow me, and came away post with only one servant.

Sir Tun. Your Lordship does me too much honour. It was exposing your person to too much fatigue and danger, I protest it was; but my daughter shall endeavour to make you what amends she can; and though I say it, that should not say it—Hoyden has charms.

Young Fash. Sir, I am not a stranger to them, though I am to her. Common fame has done her justice.

Sir Tun. My Lord, I am common fame's very grateful humble servant. My Lord—my girl's young: Hoyden is young, my Lord; but this I must say for her; what she wants in art, she has by nature; what she wants in experience, she has in breeding; and what's wanting in her age, is made good in her constitution. So pray, my Lord, walk in; pray, my Lord, walk in.

Young Fash. Sir, I wait upon you. [Exeunt.

Enter Miss Hoyden.

Miss Hoy. Sure never no body was used as I am. I know well enough what other girls do, for all they think to make a fool of me: it's well I have a husband a coming, or I-cod, I'd marry the baker, I would so. No body can knock at the gate, but presently I must be locked up; and here's the young greyhound bitch can run loose about the house all the day long, she can; 'tis very well.

[*Nurse without, opening the door.*] Miss Hoyden, Miss, Miss, Miss; Miss Hoyden.

Enter Nurse.

Miss. Well, what do you make such a noise for, ha! What do you din a body's ears for? Can't one be at quiet for you.

Nurse. What do I din your ears for? Here's one come will din you ears for you.

Miss. What care I who comes; I care not a fig, who comes, nor who goes, as long as I must be locked up like the ale-cellar.

Nurse. That, Miss, is for fear you should be drank before you are ripe.

Miss. Oh, don't you trouble your head about that: I'm as ripe as you, though not so mellow.

Nurse. Very well; now I have a good mind to lock you up again, and not let you see my Lord to-night.

Miss.

Miss. My Lord! Why, is my husband come?

Nurse. Yes, marry is he, and a goodly person too.

Miss. [*Hugging Nurse.*] Oh, my dear Nurse, forgive me this once, and I'll never misuse you again; no, if I do, you shall give me three thumps on the back, and a great pinch by the cheek.

Nurse. Ah, the poor thing! see how it melts; it's as full of good-nature, as an egg's full of meat.

Miss. But, my dear nurse, don't lie now; is he come by your troth?

Nurse. Yes, by my truly, is he.

Miss. Oh, lord! I'll go and put on my laced smock, though I'm whipped till the blood run down my heels for't.

[*Exit running.*]

Nurse. Eh—the Lord succour thee, how thou art delighted?

[*Exit after her.*]

Enter Sir Tunbelly, and Young Fashion. A servant with wine.

Sir Tun. My Lord, I'm proud of the honour to see your Lordship within my doors: and I humbly crave leave to bid you welcome in a cup of sack wine.

Young Fash. Sir, to your daughter's health. [*Drinks.*]

Sir Tun. Ah, poor girl! she'll be scared out of her wits on her wedding night; for, honestly speaking, she does not know a man from a woman, but by his beard, and his breeches.

Young Fash. Sir, I don't doubt she has had a virtuous education, which, with the rest of her merit, makes me long to see her mine. I wish you would dispense with the canonical hour, and let it be this very night.

Sir Tun. Oh, not so soon neither; that's shooting my girl before you bid her stand. No, give her fair warning, we'll sign and seal to-night, if you please; and this day seven-night—let the jade look to her quarters.

Young Fash. This day seven-night—Why, what do you take me for a ghost, Sir? 'Slife, Sir, I'm made of flesh and blood, and bones and sinews, and can no more live a week without your daughter—than I can live a month with her.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Tun. Oh, I'll warrant you, my hero; young men are hot, I know, but they don't boil over at that rate, neither.

'neither; besides, my wench's wedding gown is not come home yet.

'*Young Fash.* Oh, no matter, Sir, I'll take her in her shift. [*Aside.*] A pox of this old fellow, he'll delay the business till my damned flat finds me out, and discovers me. [*To Sir Tun.*] Pray, Sir, let it be done without ceremony, 'twill save money.

'*Sir Tun.* Money——Save money when Hoyden's to be married? Uddwoons, I'll give my wench a wedding-dinner, though I go to grass with the king of Assyria for't, and such a dinner it shall be, as is not to be cooked in the poaching of an egg. Therefore, my noble Lord, have a little patience, we'll go and look over our deeds and settlements immediately; and as for your bride, though you may be sharp-set before she's quite ready, I'll engage for my girl, she stays your stomach at last.' [*Exeunt.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Enter Miss Hoyden and Nurse.

NURSE.

WELL, Miss, how do you like your husband that is to be?

Miss. Oh, Lord, nurse, I'm so overjoyed, I can scarce contain myself.

Nurse. Oh, but you must have a care of being too fond; for men now a-days hate a woman that loves them.

Miss. Love him! Why do you think I love him; nurse? I-cod, I would not care if he were hanged, so I were but once married to him——Now——that which pleases me, is to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for when I am a wife and a lady both, Nurse, I-cod I'll fann it with the best of them.

Nurse. Look, look, if his honour be not a coming to you; now if I were sure you would behave yourself handsomely, and not disgrace me that have brought you up, I'd leave you alone together.

Miss. That's my best nurse, do as you would be done by;

by ; trust us together this once, and if I don't shew my breeding from the head to the foot of me, may I be twice married, and die a maid.

Nurse. Well, this once I'll venture you ; but if you disparage me——

Miss. Never fear, I'll shew him my parts, I'll warrant him. [*Exit Nurse.*] These old women are so wise when they get a poor girl into their clutches ; but ere it be long, I shall know what's what, as well as the best of them.

Enter Young Fashion.

Young Fash. Your servant, Madam, I'm glad to find you alone ; for I have something of importance to speak to you about.

Miss. Sir, (my Lord, I meant) you may speak to me, about what you please, I shall give you a civil answer.

Young Fash. You give me so obliging a one, it encourages me to tell you in few words, what I think both for your interest and mine. Your father, I suppose you know, has resolved to make me happy in being your husband, and I hope I may depend upon your consent, to perform what he desires.

Miss. Sir, I never disobey my father in any thing but eating of green gooseberries.

Young Fash. So good a daughter must needs be an admirable wife ; I am therefore impatient till you are mine, and hope you will so far consider the violence of my love, that you won't have the cruelty to defer my happiness, so long as your father designs it.

Miss. Pray, my Lord, how long is that ?

Young Fash. Madam, a thousand year—a whole week.

Miss. A week——why I shall be an old woman by that time.

Young Fash. And I an old man, which you'll find a greater misfortune than t'other.

Miss. Why I thought it was to be to-morrow morning, as soon as I was up ; I'm sure nurse told me so.

Young Fash. And it shall be to-morrow morning still, if you'll consent.

Miss. If I consent ! Why, I thought I was to obey you as my husband.

Y. Fash.

T. Fals. That's when we are married; till then, I am to obey you.

Miss. Why then, if we are to take it by turns, it's the same thing. I'll obey you now, and when we are married, you shall obey me.

T. Fals. With all my heart. But I doubt we must get nurse on our side, or we shall hardly prevail with the chaplain.

Miss. No more we than't, indeed; for he loves her better than he loves his pulpit, and would always be a preaching to her by his good will.

T. Fals. Why, then, my dear little bedfellow, if you'll call her hither, we'll try to persuade her presently.

Miss. Oh, lord! I can tell you a way to persuade her to any thing.

T. Fals. How's that?

Miss. Why, tell her she's a wholesome, comely woman, and give her half a crown.

T. Fals. Nay, if that will do, she shall have half a score of them.

Miss. Oh, Gemini! for half that she'd marry you herself. I'll run and call her. [Exit Miss.]

T. Fals. So, matters go swimmingly; this is a rare girl, i'faith. I shall have a fine time of it with her at London. I'm much mistaken, if she don't prove a match here all the year round. What a scampering chace will she make on't, when she finds the whole kennel of beaus at her tail! Hey to the park and the play, and the church, and the devil! She'll shew them sport, I'll warrant them. But, no matter; she brings an estate will afford me a separate maintenance.

Enter Miss and Nurse.

How do you do, good Mistress Nurse? I desired your young lady would give me leave to see you; that I might thank you for your extraordinary care and conduct in her education. Pray, accept of this small acknowledgment for it at present; and depend upon my farther kindness, when I shall be that happy thing, her husband.

Nurse. [*Aside.*] Gold, by mackins! Your honour's goodness is too great. Alas! all I can boast of is, I gave her pure good milk, and so your honour would have said, an you had seen how the poor thing suck'd it—Eh, God's blessing

bleſſing on the ſweet face on't; how it uſed to hang at at this poor teat, and ſuck, and ſqueeze, and kick, and ſprawl, it would, till the belly on't was ſo full, it would drop off like a leech.

Miſs. [*To Nurſe, taking her angrily aſide.*] Pray, one word with you; pr'ythee, Nurſe, don't ſtand ripping up old ſtories, to make one aſhamed before one's love. Do you think ſuch a fine proper gentleman as he is, cares for a fiddlecome tale of a draggle-tail'd girl? If you have a mind to make him have a good opinion of a woman, don't tell him what one did then, tell him what one can do now. [*To Y. Faſh.*] I hope your honour will excuſe my miſ-manners to whiſper before you; it was only to give ſome orders about the family.

Y. Faſh. Oh, every thing, Madam, is to give way to buſineſs! beſides, good houſewifery is a very commendable quality in a young lady.

Miſs. Pray, Sir, are young ladies good houſewives at London towſ? Do they darn their own linen?

Y. Faſh. Oh, no! they ſtudy how to ſpend money, not to ſave it.

Miſs. I'cod, I don't know but that may be better ſport than t'other, ha, Nurſe!

Y. Faſh. Well, you ſhall have your choice, when you come there.

Miſs. Shall I?—Then, by my troth, I'll get there as faſt as I can—[*To Nurſe.*] His honour deſires you'll be ſo kind as to let us be married to-morrow.

Nurſe. To-morrow, my dear Madam!

Y. Faſh. Yes, to-morrow, ſweet Nurſe, privately. ' Young folks, you know, are impatient, and Sir Tunbelly would make us ſtay a week for a wedding-dinner. ' Now, all things being ſigned and ſealed, and agreed, I ' fancy there could be no great harm in practiſing a ' ſcene or two of matrimony in private, if it were only ' to give us the better aſſurance, when we come to play ' it in public.'

Nurſe. Nay, I muſt confeſs, ſtolen pleaſures are ſweet. But if you ſhould be married now, what will you do when Sir Tunbelly calls for you to be wedded?

Miſs. Why, then we will be married again.

Nurſe. What, twice, my child?

Miſs.

Miss. I'cod, I don't care how often I'm married, not I.

T. Fash. Pray, Nurse, don't you be against your young lady's good; for, by this means, she'll have the pleasure of two wedding-days.

Miss. [*To Nurse, softly.*] And of two wedding-nights, too, Nurse.

Nurse. Well, I'm such a tender-hearted fool, I find I can refuse you nothing; so you shall e'en follow your own inventions.

Miss. Shall I? [*Aside.*] Oh, Lord, I could leap over the moon!

T. Fash. Dear Nurse, this goodness of yours shan't go unrewarded; but now you must employ your power with Mr. Bull, the chaplain, that he may do his friendly office too; and then we shall be all happy. Do you think you can prevail with him?

Nurse. Prevail with him!——or he shall never prevail with me, I can tell him that.

Miss. My Lord, she has had him upon the hip this seven year.

T. Fash. I'm glad to hear it: however, to strengthen your interest with him, you may let him know, I have several fat livings in my gift, and that the first that falls shall be in your disposal.

Nurse. Nay then, I'll make him marry more folks than one, I'll promise him.

Miss. Faith, do, Nurse, make him marry you, too. I'm sure he'll do it for a fat living; for he loves eating more than he loves his bible; and I have often heard him say, a fat living was the best meat in the world.

Nurse. Ay, and I'll make him commend the sauce, too, or I'll bring his gown to a cassock, I will so.

T. Fash. Well, Nurse, whilst you go and settle matters with him, your lady and I will go and take a walk in the garden.

Nurse. I'll do your honour's business in the catching up of a garter. [*Exit Nurse.*]

T. Fash. [*Giving her his hand.*] Come, Madam, dare you venture yourself alone with me?

Miss. Oh, dear, yes, Sir! I don't think you'll do any thing to me I need be afraid on.

[*Exeunt.*
Enter

Enter Amanda and Berinthia.

‘ A S O N G.

- ‘ I smile at love, and all its arts,
- ‘ The charming Cynthia cry’d ;
- ‘ Take heed, for love has piercing darts,
- ‘ A wounded swain reply’d.
- ‘ Once free and blest’d, as you are now,
- ‘ I trifled with his charms,
- ‘ I pointed at his little bow,
- ‘ And sported with his arms :
- ‘ Till urg’d too far, revenge, he cries,
- ‘ A fatal shaft he drew ;
- ‘ It took its passage thro’ your eyes,
- ‘ And to my heart it flew.
- ‘ To tear it thence I try’d in vain ;
- ‘ To strive, I quickly found,
- ‘ Was only to encrease the pain,
- ‘ And to enlarge the wound.
- ‘ Ah, much too well, I fear, you know
- ‘ What pain I’m to endure ;
- ‘ Since what your eyes alone could do,
- ‘ Your heart alone can cure !
- ‘ And that (grant, Heaven, I may mistake),
- ‘ I doubt, is doom’d to bear
- ‘ A burden for another’s sake,
- ‘ Who ill rewards its care.’

Am. Well, now, Berinthia, I’m at leisure to hear what ’twas you had to say to me.

Ber. What I had to say, was only to echo the sighs and groans of a dying lover.

Am. Phoo ! will you never learn to talk in earnest of any thing ?

Ber. Why, this shall be in earnest, if you please ; for my part, I only tell you matter of fact ; you may take it which way you like best : ‘ but if you’ll follow the women of the town, you’ll take it both ways ; for when a man offers himself to one of them, first she takes him in jest, and then she takes him in earnest.’

Am. ' I'm sure there's so much jest and earnest in what ' you say to me,' I scarce know how to take it. But I think you have bewitched me ; for I don't find it possible to be angry with you, say what you will.

Ber. I'm very glad to hear it ; for I have no mind to quarrel with you, for some reasons that I'll not brag of. But quarrel or not, smile or frown, I must tell you what I have suffered upon your account.

Am. Upon my account !

Ber. Yes, upon yours—I have been forced to sit still, and hear you commended for two hours together, without one compliment to myself. Now, don't you think a woman has a blessed time of that ?

Am. ' Alas, I should have been unconcerned at it ! I ' never knew where the pleasure lay of being praised by ' the men.' But, pray, who was this that commended me so ?

Ber. One you have a mortal aversion to ; Mr. Worthy. ' He used you like a text ; he took you all to pieces ; but ' spoke so learnedly upon every point, one might see the ' spirit of the church was in him. If you are a woman, ' you'd have been in an extasy to have heard how feeling- ' ly he handled your hair, your eyes, your nose, your ' mouth, your teeth, your tongue, your chin, your neck, ' and so forth. Thus he preached for an hour ; but ' when he came to use an application, he observed, that ' all these, without a gallant, were nothing—Now, con- ' sider of what has been said ; and Heaven give you grace ' to put it in practice.'

Am. Alas, Berinthia ! did I incline to a gallant, (which you know I do not) do you think a man so nice as he, could have the least concern for such a plain, unpolished thing as I am ? It is impossible !

Ber. Now have you a great mind to put me upon commending you.

Am. Indeed, that was not my design.

Ber. Nay, if it were, it's all one ; for I won't do't ; I'll leave that to your looking-glass. But, to shew you I have some good-nature left, I'll commend him ; and may be that may do as well.

Am. You have a great mind to persuade me I am in love with him.

Ber.

Ber. I have a great mind to persuade you, you don't know what you are in love with.

Am. I am sure I am not in love with him, nor never shall be; so let that pass. But you were saying something you would commend him for.

Ber. Oh, you'd be glad to hear a good character of him, however.

Am. Psha!

Ber. Psha! — Well, 'tis a foolish undertaking for women, in these kind of matters, to pretend to deceive one another — Have not I been bred a woman, as well as you?

Am. What then?

Ber. Why, then, I understand my trade so well, that, whenever I am told of a man I like, I cry, Psha! But, that I may spare you the pains of putting me a second time in mind to commend him, I'll proceed, and give you this account of him; that, tho' 'tis possible he may have had women with as good faces as your ladyship's, (no discredit to it neither) yet, you must know, your cautious behaviour, with that reserve in your humour, has given him his death's wound. He mortally hates a coquette. He says, 'tis impossible to love, where we cannot esteem; and that no woman can be esteemed by a man who has sense, if she makes herself cheap in the eye of a fool. 'That pride to a woman, is as necessary as humility to a divine; and that far-fetch'd, and dear-bought, is meat for gentlemen, as well as for ladies.' In short, that every woman who has beauty, may set a price upon herself; and that, by under-selling the market, they ruin the trade. This is his doctrine; how do you like it?

Am. So well, that, since I never intend to have a gallant for myself, if I were to recommend one to a friend, he should be the man.

Enter Worthy.

Bless me, he's here! Pray Heaven, he did not hear me!

Ber. If he did, it won't hurt your reputation; your thoughts are as safe in his heart, as in your own.

Wor. I venture in at an unseasonable time of night, ladies; I hope, if I am troublesome, you'll use the same freedom in turning me out again.

Am. I believe it can't be late ; for Mr. Loveless is ~~not~~ come home yet, and he usually keeps good hours.

Wor. Madam ; I'm afraid he'll transgress a little to-night ; for he told me, about half an hour ago, he was going to sup with some company, he doubted would keep him out till three or four o'clock in the morning ; and desired I would let my servant acquaint you with it, that you might not expect him. But my fellow's a blunder-head ; so, lest he should make some mistake, I thought it my duty to deliver the message myself.

Am. I'm very sorry he should give you that trouble, Sir ; but——

Ber. But since he has, will you give me leave, Madam, to keep him to play at ombre with us ?

Am. Cousin, you know you command my house.

Wor. [*To Ber.*] And, Madam, you know you command me ; tho' I'm a very wretched gamester.

Ber. Oh, you play well enough to lose your money, and that's all the ladies require ; and so, without any more ceremony, let's go into the next room, and call for the cards.

Am. With all my heart. [*Ex. Wor. leading out Am.*]

Ber. Well, how this business will end, Heaven knows ! but she seems to be in as fair a way——as a boy is to be a rogue, when he's put clerk to an attorney. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, Berinthia's Chamber.

Enter Loveless cautiously in the dark.

Lov. So, thus far all's well. I'm got into her bed-chamber, and I think nobody has perceived me steal into the house : my wife don't expect me home till four o'clock ; so if Berinthia comes to bed by eleven, I shall have a chace of five hours. Let me see ; where shall I hide myself ? Under her bed ? No ; we shall have her maid searching there for something or other : her closet's a better place, and I have a master-key will open it : I'll e'en in there, ' and attack her just when she comes to her prayers ; that's the most like to prove her critical minute ; for then the devil will be there to assist me.'

[*He opens the closet, goes in, and shuts the door after him.*]

Enter Berinthia, with a candle in her hand.

Ber. Well, sure I am the best natured woman in the world.

world. I, that love cards so well, (there is but one thing upon the earth that I love better) have pretended letters to write to give my friends a *tête-à-tête*. However, I'm innocent; for picquet is the game I set them to: at her own peril be it, if she ventures to play with him at any other. But now, what shall I do with myself? I don't know how in the world to pass my time. Would Loveless were here, to *badiner* a little—Well, he's a charming fellow; I don't wonder his wife's so fond of him—What if I should sit down and think of him till I fall fast asleep, and dream of the Lord knows what? Oh, but then if I should dream we were married, I should be frightened out of my wits. [*Seeing a book.*] What's this book? I think I had best go read. Oh, splenetique! it's a sermon. Well, I'll go into my closet, and read the Plotting Sisters. [*She opens the closet, sees Loveless, and shrieks out.*] Oh, Lord, a ghost, a ghost, a ghost, a ghost!

Enter Loveless running to her.

Low. Peace, my dear; it's no ghost; take it in your arms; you'll find 'tis worth a hundred of them.

Ber. Run in again; here's somebody coming.

Enter Maid.

Maid. Oh, Lord, Madam! what's the matter?

Ber. Oh, heavens, I'm almost frightened out of my wits! I thought, verily, I had seen a ghost; and 'twas nothing but the white curtain, with a black hood pinned up against it. You may be gone again—I am the fearfulest fool—

[*Exit Maid.*]

Re-enter Loveless.

Low. Is the coast clear?

Ber. The coast clear! I suppose you are clear; you'd never play such a trick as this else.

Low. I am very well pleased with my trick thus far; and shall be so till I have played it out, if it ben't your fault. Where's my wife?

Ber. At cards.

Low. With whom?

Ber. With Worthy.

Low. Then we are safe enough.

Ber. You are so! Some husbands would be of another mind, if he were at cards with their wives.

Low. And they'd be in the right on't too. But I dare

trust mine. Besides, I know he's in love in another place ; and he's not one of those who court half a dozen at a time.

Ber. Nay, the truth on't is, you'd pity him if you saw how uneasy he is, at being engaged with us ; but 'twas my malice. I fancied he was to meet his mistress somewhere else ; so did it to have the pleasure of seeing him fret.

Low. What says Amanda to my staying abroad so late ?

Ber. Why, she's as much out of humour as he ; I believe they wish one another at the devil.

Low. Then I'm afraid they'll quarrel at play, and soon throw up the cards. [*Offering to pull her into the closet.*] Therefore, my dear, charming angel, let us make good use of our time.

Ber. Heavens ! what do you mean ?

Low. Pray, what do you think I mean ?

Ber. I don't know.

Low. I'll shew you.

Ber. You may as well tell me.

Low. No, that would make you blush worse than t'other.

Ber. Why, do you intend to make me blush ?

Low. Faith, I can't tell that ; but if I do, it shall be in the dark. [*Pulling her.*]

Ber. Oh, heavens ! I would not be in the dark with you for all the world.

Low. I'll try that. [*Puts out the candle.*]

Ber. Oh, Lord ! are you mad ? What shall I do for light ?

Low. You'll do as well without it.

Ber. Why, one can't find a chair to sit down ?

Low. Come into the closet, Madam ; there's moonshine upon the couch.

Ber. Nay, never pull ; for I will not go.

Low. Then you must be carried. [*Carrying her.*]

Ber. ' Help, help ! I'm ravish'd, ruin'd, undone ! ' Oh, Lord, I shall never be able to bear it ! [*Very softly.*]

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, Sir Tunbelly's House.

Enter Miss Hoyden, Nurse, Young Fashion, and Bull.

Y. Fash. This quick dispatch of yours, Mr. Bull, I take
so

so kindly, it shall give you claim to my favour as long as I live, I do assure you.

Miss. And to mine too, I promise you.

Bull. I most humbly thank your honours; and I hope, since it has been my lot to join you in the holy bands of wedlock, you will so well cultivate the soil which I have craved a blessing on, that your children may swarm about you like bees about a honey-comb.

Miss. I'cod, with all my heart; the more the merrier, I say: ha, Nurse.

Enter Lory, taking his master hastily aside.

Lor. One word with you, for Heaven's sake.

Y. Fash. What the devil's the matter?

Lor. Sir, your fortune's ruined; 'and I don't think your life's worth a quarter of an hour's purchase.' Yonder's your brother arrived, with two coaches and six horses, twenty footmen and pages, a coat worth fourscore pounds, and a periwig down to his knees: so judge what will become of your lady's heart.

Y. Fash. Death and furies, 'tis impossible!

Lor. Fiends and spectres, Sir? 'tis true.

Y. Fash. Is he in the house yet?

Lor. No, they are capitulating with him at the gate; the porter tells him, he's come to run away with Miss Hoyden, and has cock'd the blunderbuss at him; your brother swears, Gad damme, they are a parcel of clowns, 'and he had a good mind to break off the match; but they have given the word for Sir Tunbelly; so, I doubt, all will come out, presently.' Pray, Sir, resolve what you'll do, this moment; 'for, 'egad, they'll maul you.'

Y. Fash. Stay a little — [*To Miss.*] My dear, here's a troublesome business, my man tells me of; but don't be frightened; we shall be too hard for the rogue. Here's an impudent fellow at the gate, (not knowing I was come hither *incognito*) has taken my name upon him, in hopes to run away with you.

Miss. Oh, the brazen-fac'd varlet! It's well we are married, or may be we might never have been so.

Y. Fash. [*Aside.*] 'Egad, like enough—Pr'ythee, dear Doctor, run to Sir Tunbelly, and stop him from going to the gate, before I speak with him.

Bull. I fly, my good Lord—

[*Exit Bull.*
Nurse.

Nurse. An't please your honour, my Lady and I had best lock ourselves up till the danger be over.

Y. Fash. Ay, by all means.

Miss. Not so fast; I won't be locked up any more; I'm married.

Y. Fash. Yes, pray, my dear, do, till we have seized this rascal.

Miss. Nay, if you pray me, I'll do any thing.

[*Exeunt Miss and Nurse.*]

Y. Fash. Oh, here's Sir Tunbelly coming—[*To Lory.*] Hark you, Sirrah, things are better than you imagine; the wedding's over.

Lor. The devil it is, Sir.

Y. Fash. Not a word, all's safe; but Sir Tunbelly don't know it, nor must not yet; so I am resolved to brazen the business out, and have the pleasure of turning the impostor upon his lordship, which I believe may easily be done.

Enter Sir Tunbelly, Chaplain, and Servants, armed.

Y. Fash. Did you ever hear, Sir, of so impudent an undertaking?

Sir Tun. Never, by the mass; but we'll tickle him, I warrant you.

Y. Fash. They tell me, Sir, he has a great many people with him, disguised like servants.

Sir Tun. Ay, ay, rogues enow; but I'll soon raise the posse upon him.

Y. Fash. Sir, if you'll take my advice, we'll go a shorter way to work; I find, whoever this spack is, he knows nothing of my being privately here; so, if you pretend to receive him civilly, he'll enter without suspicion; and as soon as he is within the gate, we'll whip up the draw-bridge upon his back, let fly the blunderbuss to disperse the crew, and so commit him to gaol.

Sir Tun. 'Egad, your lordship is an ingenious person, and a very great general; but shall we kill any of them, or not?

Y. Fash. No, no, fire over their heads, only to fright them; I'll warrant the regiment scours, when the colonel's a prisoner.

Sir Tun. Then come along, my boys; and let your courage be great—for your danger is but small. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, *the Gate.**Enter Lord Foppington and Followers.*

Lord Fop. A pax of these bumkinly people! will they open the gate, or do they desire I should grow at their moat-side, like a willow? [*To the Porter.*] Hey, fellow! Pr'ythee, do me the favour, in as few words as thou canst find to express thyself, to tell me whether thy master will admit me or not, that I may turn about my coach, and begone?

Por. Here's my master himself now at hand; he's of age, he'll give you his answer.

Enter Sir Tunbelly and his Servants.

Sir Tun. My most noble Lord, I crave your pardon for making your honour wait so long; but my orders to my servants have been to admit nobody without my knowledge, for fear of some attempt upon my daughter, the times being full of plots and roguery.

Lord Fop. Much caution, I must confess, is a sign of great wisdom. But, stap my vitals, I have got a cold enough to destroy a porter—He, hem—

Sir Tun. I am very sorry for it, indeed, my Lord; but if your lordship please to walk in, we'll help you to some brown sugar-candy. My Lord, I'll shew you the way.

Lord Fop. Sir, I follow with pleasure. [*Exeunt.*

[*As Lord Foppington's Servants go to follow him in, they clap the door against La Verole.*

Servants. [*Within.*] Nay, hold you me there, Sir.

La Ver. Fernie, qu'est ce que veut dire ça?

Sir Tun. [*Within.*] Fire, portèr.

La Ver. Ah, je suis mort!— [*The Servants all run off.*

Port. Not one soldier left, by the mass.

SCENE *changes into a Hall.*

Enter Sir Tunbelly, the Chaplain and Servants, with Lord Foppington disarmed.

Sir Tun. Come, bring him along, bring him along.

Lord Fop. What the pax do you mean, gentlemen? Is 'it fair-time, that you are all drunk before dinner?

Sir Tun. Drunk, firrah! Here's an impudent rogue for you. Drunk or sober, bully, I'm a justice of the peace, and know how to deal with strollers.

Lord

Lord Fop. Strollers !

Sir Tun. Ay, strollers. Come, give an account of yourself. What's your name ? Where do you live ? Do you pay scot and lot ? Are you a Williamite, or a Jacobite ? Come——

Lord Fop. And why dost thou ask me so many impertinent questions ?

Sir Tun. Because I'll make you answer them before I have done with you, you rascal you.

Lord Fop. Before Gad, all the answer I can make thee to them is, that thou art a very extraordinary old fellow, flap my vitals.

Sir Tun. Nay, if you are for joking with deputy lieutenants, we know how to deal with you. Here, draw a warrant for him immediately.

Lord Fop. A warrant !——What the devil is it thou would be at, old gentleman ?

Sir Tun. I would be at you, firrah, (if my hands were not tied as a magistrate) and with these two double fists, beat your teeth down your throat, you dog you.

Lord Fop. And why wouldst thou spoil my face at that rate ?

Sir Tun. For your design to rob me of my daughter, villain.

Lord Fop. Rab thee of thy daughter !——Now do I begin to believe I'm a-bed and asleep, and that all this is but a dream——If it be, it will be an agreeable surprise enough, to waken by and by, and, instead of the impertinent company of a nasty country justice, find myself, perhaps, in the arms of a woman of quality—[To *Sir Tun.*] Pr'ythee, old father, wilt thou give me leave to ask thee one question ?

Sir Tun. I can't tell whether I will or not, till I know what it is.

Lord Fop. Why, then, it is, whether thou didst not write to my Lord Foppington, to come down and marry thy daughter ?

Sir Tun. Yes, marry, did I ; and my Lord Foppington is come down, and shall marry my daughter before she's a day older.

Lord Fop. Now give me thy hand, dear dad ; I thought we should understand one another at last.

Sir

Sir Tun. This fellow's mad—Here, bind him hand and foot. *[They bind him down.]*

Lord Fop. Nay, pr'ythee, knight, leave fooling; thy jest begins to grow dull.

Sir Tun. Bind him, I say; he's mad—Bread and water, a dark room, and a whip, may bring him to his senses again.

Lord Fop. *[Aside.]* 'Egad, if I don't waken quickly, by all that I can see, this is like to prove one of the most impertinent dreams that ever I dreamt in my life.

Enter Miss and Nurse.

Miss. *[Going up to him.]* Is this he that would have run away with me? Fough, how he stinks of sweets!—Pray, father, let him be dragged through the horse-pond.

Lord Fop. *[Aside.]* This must be my wife, by her natural inclination to her husband.

Miss. Pray, father, what do you intend to do with him? Hang him?

Sir Tun. That a least, child.

Nurse. Ay, and it's e'en too good for him, too.

Lord Fop. *[Aside.]* *Madame la governante*, I presume. Hitherto, this appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary families that ever man of quality matched into.

Sir Tun. What's become of my Lord, daughter?

Miss. He's just coming, Sir.

Lord Fop. *[Aside.]* My Lord—What does he mean by that, now?

Enter Young Fashion and Lory.

[Seeing him.] Stap my vitals, Tam, now the dream's out.

Y. Fash. Is this the fellow, Sir, that designed to trick me of your daughter?

Sir Tun. This is he my Lord; how do you like him? Is not he a pretty fellow to get a fortune?

Y. Fash. I find, by his drefs, he thought your daughter might be taken with a beau.

Miss. Oh, Gemini! is this a beau? Let me see him again—Ha! I find a beau is no such ugly thing neither.

Y. Fash. 'Egad, she'll be in love with him presently; I'll e'en have him sent away to gaol—*[To Lord Fop.]* Sir, tho' your understanding shows you a person of no extraordinary modesty, I suppose you han't confidence enough to expect much favour from me.

Lord

Lord Fop. Strike me dumb, Tam, thou art a very impudent fellow.

Nurse. Look, if the varlet has not the frontery to call his lordship plain Thomas.

Bull. The business is, he would feign himself mad, to avoid going to gaol.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] That must be the chaplain, by his unfolding of mysteries.

Sir Tun. Come, is the warrant writ?

Cler. Yes, Sir?

Sir Tun. Give me the pen, I'll sign it—So, now, constable, away with him.

Lord Fop. Hold one moment, pray, gentlemen—My Lord Foppington, shall I beg one word with your Lordship?

Nurse. Oh, ho! is it my Lord with him now? See how afflictions will humble folks.

Miss. Pray, my Lord, don't let him whisper too close, lest he bite your ear off.

Lord Fop. I am not altogether so hungry as your Ladyship is pleased to imagine—[*To Y. Fash.*] Look you, Tam, I am sensible I have not been so kind to you as I ought; but I hope you'll forgive what's past, and accept of the five thousand pounds I offer: thou may'st live in extreme splendor with it, stop my vitals.

Y. Fash. It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease, than to cure it; a quarter of that sum would have secured your mistress; twice as much won't redeem her.

[*Leaving him.*]

Sir Tun. Well, what says he?

Y. Fash. Only the rascal offered me a bribe to let him go.

Sir Tun. Ay, he shall go, with a pox to him. Lead on, constable.

Lord Fop. One word more, and I have done.

Sir Tun. Before gad, thou art an impudent fellow, to trouble the court at this rate, after thou art condemned. But speak, once for all.

Lord Fop. Why, then, once for all; I have, at last, luckily called to mind, that there is a gentleman of this country, who, I believe, cannot live far from this place, if he were here, would satisfy you I am Navelty, Baron

of

of Foppington, with five thousand pounds a year, and that fellow there, a rascal, not worth a groat.

Sir Tun. Very well; now who is this honest gentleman you are so well acquainted with? — [*To Y. Fash.*] Come, Sir, we shall hamper him.

Lord Fop. 'Tis Sir John Friendly.

Sir Tun. So—he lives within half a mile, and came down into the country but last night. This bold-faced fellow thought he had been at London still, and so quoted him; now we shall display him in his colours; I'll send for Sir John immediately. Here, fellow, away presently, and desire my neighbour he'll do me the favour to step over, upon an extraordinary occasion; and, in the mean while, you had best secure this sharper in the gate-house.

Const. An't please your worship, he may chance to give us the slip thence. If I were worthy to advise, I think the dog-kennel's a surer place.

Sir Tun. With all my heart, any where.

Lord Fop. Nay, for Heaven's sake, Sir, do me the favour to put me in a clean room, that I mayn't daub my cloaths.

Sir Tun. Oh, when you have married my daughter, her estate will afford you new ones. Away with him.

Lord Fop. A dirty country justice is a barbarous magistrate, slap my vitals.

[*Exit Constable with Lord Foppington.*]

Y. Fash. [*Aside.*] 'Egad, I must prevent this knight's coming, or the house will soon grow too hot to hold me — [*To Sir Tun.*] Sir, I fancy 'tis not worth while to trouble Sir John upon this impertinent fellow's desire. I'll send and call the messenger back.

Sir Tun. Nay, with all my heart: for, to be sure, he thought he was far enough off, or the rogue would never have named him.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, I met Sir John just alighting at the gate; he's come to wait upon you.

Sir Tun. Nay, then it happens as one could wish.

Y. Fash. [*Aside.*] The devil it does! Lory, you see how things are; here will be a discovery presently, and we shall have our brains beat out; for my brother will be

sure to swear he don't know me : therefore, run into the stable, take the two first horses you can light on, I'll slip out at the back-door, and we'll away immediately.

Lor. What, and leave your Lady, Sir ?

Y. Fash. There's no danger in that, as long as I have taken possession ; I shall know how to treat with them well enough, if once I am out of their reach. Away ; I'll steal after thee.

[*Exit Lory ; his master follows him out at one door, while Sir John enters at the other.*

Sir Tun. Sir John, you are the welcomest man alive ; I had just sent a messenger to desire you'd step over, upon a very extraordinary occasion—We are all in arms here.

Sir John. How so ?

Sir Tun. Why, you must know, a finical sort of a tawdry fellow here, (I don't know what the devil he is, not I) hearing, I suppose, that the match was concluded betwixt my Lord Foppington and my girl, Hoyden, comes impudently to the gate, and, with a whole pack of rogues in liveries, would have passed upon me for his Lordship. But what does I ? I comes up to him boldly, at the head of his guards, takes him by the throat, strikes up his heels, binds him hand and foot, dispatches a warrant, and commits him prisoner to the dog-kennel.

Sir John. So—But how do you know but this was my Lord ? For I was told he set out from London the day before me, with a very fine retinue, and intended to come directly hither.

Sir Tun. Why, now to shew you how many lies people raise in that dant'd town, he came two nights ago, post, with only one servant, and is now in the house with me. But you don't know the cream of the jest yet ; this same rogue, (that lies yonder neck and heels among the hounds) thinking you were out of the country, quotes you for his acquaintance, and said, if you were here, you'd justify him to be Lord Foppington, and I know not what.

Sir John. Your servants told me the business ; and that the impostor quotes me for his acquaintance. Pray, let me see him.

Sir Tun. Ay, that you shall, presently—Here, fetch the prisoner.

[*Exit Servant.*
Sir

'*Sir Tun.* He was here just now ; see for him,' Doctor, tell my Lord, Sir John Friendly is here to wait upon him. [*Exit Chaplain.*]

'*Sir John.* I hope, Sir Tunbelly, the young lady is not married yet.

'*Sir Tun.* No, things won't be ready this week ; but why do you say, you hope she is not married ?

'*Sir John.* Some foolish fancies only ; perhaps I'm mistaken.'

Re-enter Chaplain.

Bull. Sir, his Lordship is just rid out to take the air.

Sir Tun. To take the air ! Is that his London breeding, to go to take the air, when gentlemen come to visit him.

'*Sir John.* 'Tis possible he might want it, he might not be well, some sudden qualm perhaps.'

Enter Constable, &c. with Lord Foppington.

Lord Fop. Stap my vitals, I'll have satisfaction.

Sir John. [*Running to him.*] My dear Lord Foppington !

Lord Fop. Dear Friendly, thou art come in the critical minute, strike me dumb.

Sir John. Why, I little thought to have found you in fetters.

Lord Fop. Why truly the world must do me the justice to confess, I do use to appear a little more *depayé* : but this old gentleman, not liking the freedom of my air, has been pleased to skewer down my arms like a rabbit.

Sir Tun. Is it then possible that this should be the true Lord Foppington at last ?

Lord Fop. Why, what do you see in his face to make you doubt of it ? Sir, without presuming to have any extraordinary opinion of my figure, give me leave to tell you, if you had seen as many Lords as I have done, you would not think it impossible a person of a worse *taille* than mine, might be a modern man of quality.

Sir Tun. Unbind him, slaves : my Lord, I'm struck dumb, I can only beg pardon by signs ; but if a sacrifice will appease you, you shall have it. Here, pursue this Tartar, bring him back——Away, I say, a dog. Oons——I'll cut off his ears and his tail, I'll draw out

all his teeth, pull his skin over his head——and——
what shall I do more?

Sir John. He does indeed deserve to be made an example of.

Lord Fop. He does deserve to be *chartré*, flap my vitals.

Sir Tun. May I then hope I have your honour's pardon?

Lord Fop. Sir, we courtiers do nothing without a bribe; that fair young lady might do miracles.

Sir Tun. Hoyden, come hither, Hoyden.

Lord Fop. Hoyden is her name, Sir?

Sir Tun. Yes, my Lord.

Lord Fop. The prettiest name for a song I ever heard.

Sir Tun. My Lord——here's my girl, she's yours, she has a wholesome body, and a virtuous mind: she's a woman complete, both in flesh and in spirit; she has a bag of milled crowns, as scarce as they are, and fifteen hundred a year stitched fast to her tail: so go thy ways, Hoyden.

Lord Fop. Sir, I do receive her like a gentleman.

Sir Tun. Then I'm a happy man, and if your Lordship will give me leave, I will, like a good Christian at Christmas, be very drunk by way of thanksgiving. Come, my noble peer, I believe dinner's ready; if your honour pleases to follow me, I'll lead you on to the attack of a venison patty. [Exit Sir Tun.]

Lord Fop. Sir, I wait upon you. Will your Ladyship do me the favour of your little finger, Madam?

Miss. My Lord, I'll follow you presently. I have a little business with my nurse.

Lord Fop. Your Ladyship's most humble servant: come, Sir John, the ladies have *des affaires*.

[Exit Lord Fop. and Sir John.]

Miss. So, nurse, we are finely brought to bed: what shall we do now?

Nurse. Ah, dear Miss, we are all undone. 'Mr. Bull, you were used to help a woman to a remedy.' [Crying.]

'Bull. A lack a-day, but it's past my skill now, I can do nothing.'

'Nurse. Who would have thought that ever your invention should have been drained so dry?'

Miss. Well, I have often thought old folks fools, and
now

now I'm sure they are so: I have found a way myself to secure us all.

Nurse. Dear lady, what's that?

Miss. Why, if you two will be sure to hold your tongues, and not say a word of what's past, I'll e'en marry this lord too.

Nurse. What! two husbands, my dear?

Miss. Why you had three, good nurse, you may hold your tongue.

Nurse. Ay, but not altogether, sweet child.

Miss. Psha! if you had, you'd ne'er a thought much on't.

Nurse. Oh, but 'tis a sin——Sweeting.

Bull. Nay, that's my business to speak to, nurse: I do confess, to take two husbands for the satisfaction of the flesh, is to commit the sin of exorbitancy; but to do it for the peace of the spirit, is no more than to be drunk by way of physic: besides, to prevent a parent's wrath, is to avoid the sin of disobedience; for when the parent's angry, the child is froward. So that upon the whole matter, I do think, though Miss should marry again, she may be saved.

Miss. I-cod, and I will marry again then, and so there is an end of the story. [Exeunt.]

*SCENE, Berinthia's Apartment.

Enter her Maid, passing the Stage, followed by Worthy.

Wor. Hem, Mrs. Abigail, is your mistress to be spoken with?

Ab. By you, Sir, I believe she may.

Wor. Why, 'tis by me I would have her spoken with.

Ab. I'll acquaint her, Sir.

[Exit Abigail.]

Wor. [Alone.] One list more I must persuade her to give me, and then I'm mounted. Well, a young bawd, and a handsome one for my money, 'tis they do the execution; I'll never go to an old one, but when I have occasion for a witch. Lewdness looks heavenly to a woman, when an angel appears in its cause; but when a hag is advocate, she thinks it comes from the devil.

* In the original, this is the second scene in the Fifth Act.

'An old woman has something so terrible in her looks, that whilst she is persuading your mistress to forget she has a soul, she stares hell and damnation full in her face.'

Enter Berinthia.

Ber. Well, Sir, what news bring you?

Wor. No news, Madam, there's a woman going to cuckold her husband.

Ber. Amanda?

Wor. I hope so.

Ber. Speed her well.

Wor. Ay, but there must be a more than a 'God'-speed, or your charity won't be worth a farthing.

Ber. Why, han't I done enough already?

Wor. Not quite.

Ber. What's the matter?

Wor. The lady has a scruple still, which you must remove.

Ber. What's that?

Wor. Her virtue——she says.

Ber. And do you believe her?

Wor. No, but I believe it's what she takes for her virtue; it's some relics of lawful love! She is not yet fully satisfied her husband has got another mistress, which, unless I can convince her of, I have opened the trenches in vain; for the breach must be wider, before I dare storm the town.

Ber. And so I'm to be your engineer?

Wor. I'm sure you know best how to manage the battery.

Ber. What think you of springing a mine? I have a thought just now come into my head, how to blow her up at once.

Wor. That would be a thought indeed.

Ber. Faith, I'll do't, and thus the execution of it shall be. We are all invited to my Lord Foppington's to-night to supper; 'he's come to town with his bride, and gives a ball with an entertainment of music.' Now you must know, my undoer here, Loveless, says, he must needs meet me about some private business (I don't know what 'tis) before we go to the company. To which end, he has told his wife one lie, and I have told her another.

But

But to make her amends, I'll go immediately, and tell her a solemn truth.

Wor. What's that?

Ber. Why, I'll tell her, that to my certain knowledge her husband has a rendezvous with his mistress this afternoon: and that, if she'll give me her word, she will be satisfied with the discovery, without making any violent inquiry after the woman, I'll direct her to a place where she shall see them meet.—Now, friend, this, I fancy, may help you to a critical minute. For home she must go again to dress. You, with your good breeding, come to wait upon us to the ball, find her all alone, her spirit enflamed against her husband for his treason, and her flesh in a heat from some contemplations upon the treachery, her blood on a fire, her conscience in ice; a lover to draw, and the devil to drive ——— Ah, poor Amanda!

Wor. [*Kneeling.*] Thou angel of light, let me fall down and adore thee!

Ber. Thou minister of darkness, get up again, for I hate to see the devil at his devotions.

Wor. Well, my incomparable Berinthia——How shall I requite you——

Ber. Oh, ne'er trouble yourself about that: virtue is its own reward. There's a pleasure in doing good, which sufficiently pays itself. Adieu.

Wor. Farewel, thou best of women.

[*Exeunt several ways*]

Enter Amanda, meeting Berinthia.

Am. Who was that went from you?

Ber. A friend of yours.

Am. What does he want?

Ber. Something you might spare him, and be ne'er the poorer.

Am. I can spare him nothing but my friendship; my love already's all disposed of: though, I confess, to one ungrateful to my bounty.

Ber. Why there's the mystery! You have been so bountiful, you have cloyed him. 'Fond wives do by their husbands, as barren wives do by their lap-dogs; cram them with sweetmeats till they spoil their stomachs.'

Am.

Am. Alas! Had you but seen how passionately fond he has been since our last reconciliation, you would have thought it were impossible he ever should have breathed an hour without me.

Ber. Ay, but there you thought wrong again, Amanda; 'you should consider, that in matters of love men's eyes are always bigger than their bellies. They have violent appetites, 'tis true, but they have soon dined.'

Am. Well; there's nothing upon earth astonishes me more than men's inconstancy.

Ber. Now there's nothing upon earth astonishes me less, when I consider what they and we are composed of: for nature has made them children, and us babies. Now, Amanda, how we used our babies, you may remember. We were mad to have them, as soon as we saw them; kissed them to pieces, as soon as we got them; then pulled off their clothes, saw them naked, and so threw them away.

Am. But do you think all men are of this temper?

Ber. All but one.

Am. Who's that?

Ber. Worthy.

Am. Why, he's weary of his wife too, you see.

Ber. Ay, that's no proof.

Am. What can be a greater?

Ber. Being weary of his mistress.

Am. Don't you think 'twere possible he might give you that too?

Ber. Perhaps he might, if he were my gallant; not if he were yours.

Am. Why do you think he should be more constant to me, than he would to you? I'm sure I'm not so handsome.

Ber. Kissing goes by favour: he likes you best.

Am. Suppose he does; that's no demonstration he would be constant to me.

Ber. No, that I'll grant you: but there are other reasons to expect it; for you must know after all, Amanda, the inconstancy we commonly see in men of brains, does not so much proceed from the uncertainty of their temper, as from the misfortunes of their love. A man sees, perhaps, an hundred women he likes well
 ' enough

enough for an intrigue, and away ; but possibly, thro' the whole course of his life, does not find above one, who is exactly what he could wish her : now her, 'tis a thousand to one, he never gets. Either she is not to be had at all (though that seldom happens, you'll say) or he wants those opportunities that are necessary to gain her ; either she likes somebody else much better than him, or uses him like a dog, because he likes nobody so well as her. Still something or other Fate claps in the way between them and the woman they are capable of being fond of : and this makes them wander about from mistress to mistress, like a pilgrim from town to town, who every night must have a fresh lodging, and is in haste to be gone in the morning.'

Am. 'Tis possible there may be something in what you say ; but what do you infer from it, as to the man we were talking of ?

Ber. Why, I infer, that you being the woman in the world, the most to his humour, 'tis not likely he would quit you for one that is less.

Am. That is not to be depended upon, for you see Mr. Loveless does so.

Ber. What does Mr. Loveless do ?

Am. Why, he runs after something for variety, I'm sure he does not like so well as he does me.

Ber. That's more than you know, Madam.

Am. No, I'm sure on't : I am not very vain, Berinthia ; and yet I'll lay my life, if I could look into his heart, he thinks I deserve to be preferred to a thousand of her.

Ber. Don't be too positive in that neither : a million to one, but she has the same opinion of you. What would you give to see her ?

Am. Hang her, a dirty trull ; though I really believe she's so ugly, she'd cure me of my jealousy.

Ber. All the men of sense about town say she's handsome.

Am. They are as often out in those things as any people.

Ber. Then I'll give you farther proof—all the women about town say, she's a fool : now I hope you are convinced ?

Am. Whate'er she be, I'm satisfied he does not like her well

well enough to bestow any thing more than a little outward gallantry upon her.

Ber. Outward gallantry!—*[Aside.]* I can't bear this. *[To Aman.]* Don't you think she's a woman to be fobbed off so. Come, I'm too much your friend, to suffer you should be thus grossly imposed upon, by a man who does not deserve the least part about you, unless he knew how to set a greater value upon it. Therefore, in one word, to my certain knowledge, he is to meet her now, within a quarter of an hour, 'somewhere about that Babylon of wickedness, Whitehall.' And if you'll give me your word that you'll be content with seeing her without pulling her headclothes off, I'll step immediately to the person from whom I have my intelligence, and send you word whereabouts you may stand to see them meet. 'My friend and I'll watch them from another place, and dodge them to their private lodging: but don't you offer to follow them, lest you do it awkwardly, and spoil all. I'll come home to you again, as soon as I have earthed them, and give you an account in what corner of the house the focus of their lowliness lies.'

Am. If you can do this, Berinthia, he's a villain.

Ber. I can't help that, men will be so.

Am. Well! I'll follow your directions; for I shall never rest till I know the worst of this matter.

Ber. Pray, go immediately, and get yourself ready then. Put on some of your woman's clothes, a great scarf and a mask, and you shall presently receive orders. *[Calls within.]* Here, who's there? get me a chair quickly.

Serv. There are chairs at the door, Madam.

Ber. 'Tis well, I'm coming.

Am. But, pray, Berinthia, before you go, tell me how I may know this filthy thing, if she should be so forward (as I suppose she will) to come to the rendezvous first; for, methinks, I would fain view her a little.

Ber. Why, she's about my height? and very well shaped.

Am. I thought she had been a little crooked.

Ber. Oh, no, she's as straight as I am. But we lose time; come away.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

THE RELAPSE.

83

ACT V.

SCENE, *London.*

Enter Coupler, Young Fashion, and Lory.

COUPLER.

WELL, and so Sir John coming in——

Young F. And so Sir John coming in, I thought it might be manners in me to go out, which I did, and getting on horseback as fast as I could, rid away as if the devil had been at the rear of me; what has happened since, heaven knows.

Coup. 'Egad, firrah, I know as well as heaven.

Young F. What do you know?

Coup. That you are a cuckold.

Young F. The devil I am! By who?

Coup. By your brother.

Young F. My brother! which way?

Coup. The old way: he has lain with your wife.

Young F. Hell and furies, what dost thou mean?

Coup. I mean plainly, I speak no parable.

Young F. Plainly! thou dost not speak common sense, I cannot understand one word thou sayest.

Coup. You will do soon, youngster. In short, you left your wife a widow, and she married again.

Young Fash. It's a lie.

Coup. —— I-cod, if I were a young fellow, I'd break your head, firrah.

Young F. Dear dad, don't be angry, for I am as mad as Tom of Bedlam.

Coup. When I had fitted you with a wife, you should have kept her.

Young F. But is it possible the young strumpet could play me such a trick?

Coup. A young strumpet, Sir——can play twenty tricks.

Young F. But, pr'ythee, instruct me a little farther; whence comes thy intelligence?

Coup. From your brother, in this letter; there, you may read it. Now you have told me your story, I'll let you into mine in this letter, read it. [*Young Fashion reads.*

" Dear Coupler,

" [*Pulling off his bat.*] I have only time to tell thee in three lines, or thereabouts, that here has been the devil: that rascal, Tam, having stole the letter thou hadst formerly writ for me to bring to Sir Tunbelly, formed a damnable design upon my mistress, and was in a fair way of success when I arrived. But after having suffered some indignities (in which I have all daubed my embroidered coat) I put him to flight. I sent out a party of horse after him, in hopes to have made him my prisoner, which, if I had done, I would have qualified him for the seraglio, strap my vitals. The danger, I have thus narrowly escaped, has made me fortify myself against further attempts, by entering immediately into an association with the young lady, by which we engage to stand by one another, as long as we both shall live. In short, the papers are sealed, and the contract is signed, so the business of the lawyer is *achevé*; but I defer the divine part of the thing till I arrive at London, not being willing to consummate in any other bed but my own.

" *P. S.* 'Tis possible I may be in the tawn as soon as this letter; for I find the lady is so violently in love with me, I have determined to make her happy with all the dispatch that is practicable, without disordering my coach horses."

So here's rare work, i'faith!

Lory. 'Egad, Miss Hoyden has laid about her bravely.

Coup. I think my country-girl has played her part, as well as if she had been born and bred in St. James's parish.

Young F.—That rogue the chaplain.

Lory. And then that jade the nurse, Sir.

Young F. And then that drunken sot, Lory, Sir; that could not keep himself sober to be a witness to the marriage.

Lory. Sir—with respect—I know very few drunken sots that do keep themselves sober.

Young F. Hold your prating, sirrah, or I'll break your head. Dear Coupler, what's to be done?

Coup. Nothing's to be done till the bride and bridegroom come to town.

Young

Young F. Bride and bridegroom; hell and furies! I can't bear you should call them so.

Comp. Why, what shall I call them, dog and cat?

Young F. Not for the world; that sounds more like man and wife than t'other.

Comp. Well, call them what you will, there's nothing to be done without them. But you have been an idle young rogue, or the girl would never have left thee.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter Amanda, in a scarf, &c. as just returned, her woman following her.**

Am. Pr'ythee, what care I who has been here?

Wom. Madam, 'twas my Lady Bridle, and my Lady Tiptoe.

Am. My Lady Fiddle and my Lady Faddle. What do'st stand troubling me with the visits of a parcel of impertinent women? When they are well seamed with the small pox, they won't be so fond of shewing their faces—There are more coquettes about this town—

Wom. Madam, I suppose, they only came to return your Ladyship's visit, according to the custom of the world.

Am. Would the world were on fire, and you in the middle on't. Begone; leave me. [*Exit Woman.*]

Am. [*Alone.*] At last I am convinc'd. My eyes are testimonies of his falshood.

The base, ungrateful, perjur'd villain—

Good Gods—What slippery stuff are men compos'd of?

Sure the account of their creation's false,

And 'twas the woman's rib that they were form'd of.

But why am I thus angry?

This poor relapse shou'd only move my scorn.

'Tis true; the roving flights of his unfinish'd youth,

Had strong excuses from the plea of nature:

Reason had thrown the reins loose on his neck,

And flipt him to unlimited desire.

If therefore he went wrong, he had a claim

To my forgiveness, and I did him right:

But since the years of manhood rein him in,

H

And

* In the Original; this Scene precedes the Scene between *Miss* and *Nurse*. See p. 94.

- ' And reason, well digested into thought,
 ' Has pointed out the course he ought to run ;
 ' If now he strays,
 ' 'Twou'd be as weak, and mean in me to pardon,
 ' As it has been in him t'offend. But hold !
 ' 'Tis an ill cause indeed, where nothing's to be said for't.
 ' My beauty possibly is in the wain :
 ' Perhaps sixteen has greater charms for him :
 ' Yes, there's the secret. But let him know,
 ' My quiver's not entirely empty'd yet ;
 ' I still have darts, and I can shoot 'em too :
 ' They're not so blunt, but they can enter still ;
 ' The want's not in my power, but in my will.
 ' Virtue's his friend ; or, thro' another's heart,
 ' I yet cou'd find the way to make his smart.'

[Going off, she meets Worthy.

Ha ! he here ! Protect me, heaven, for this looks ominous.

Wor. You seem disordered, Madam ; I hope there's no misfortune happened to you ?

Am. None that will long disorder me, I hope.

Wor. Whate'er it be disturbs you, I would to Heaven 'twere in my power to bear the pain, till I were able to remove the cause.

Am. I hope ere long it will remove itself ; at least, I have given it warning to be gone.

' *Wor.* Wou'd I durst ask, where 'tis the thorn tortments you ?

' Forgive me, if I grow inquisitive ;

' 'Tis only with desire to give you ease.

' *Am.* Alas ! 'tis in a tender part. It can't be drawn without a world of pain : yet out it must ; for it begins to fester in my heart.'

Wor. If 'tis the sting of unrequited love, remove it instantly : I have a balm will quickly heal the wound.

Am. You'll find the undertaking difficult : the surgeon, who already has attempted it, has much tormented me.

Wor. I'll aid him with a gentler hand—if you will give me leave.

Am. How soft so'er the hand may be, there still is terror in the operation.

Wor.

Wor. Some few preparatives would make it easy, could I persuade you to apply 'em. Make home reflections, Madam, on your slighted love : weigh well the strength and beauty of your charms : rouse up that spirit women ought to bear, ' and slight your god, ' if he neglects his ' angel.' With arms of ice receive his cold embraces, and keep your fire for those who come in flames. Behold a burning lover at your feet, his fever raging in his veins. ' See how he trembles, how he pants ! See how ' he glows, how he consumes ! ' Extend the arms of mercy to his aid : his zeal may give him title to your pity, altho' his merit cannot claim your love.

Am. Of all my feeble sex, sure I must be the weakest, should I again presume to think on love. [*Sighing.*]
—Alas ! my heart has been too roughly treated.

Wor. 'Twill find the greater bliss in softer usage.

Am. But where's that usage to be found ?

Wor. 'Tis here, within this faithful breast ; which, if you doubt, I'll rip it up before your eyes ; lay all its secrets open to your view ; and then you'll see 'twas found.

Am. With just such honest words as these, the worst of men deceiv'd me.

Wor. He therefore merits all revenge can do : his fault is such, the extent and stretch of vengeance cannot reach it. O make me but your instrument of justice ; you'll find me execute it with such zeal, as shall convince you I abhor the crime.

Am. The rigour of an executioner, has more the face of cruelty than justice : and he who puts the cord about the wretch's neck, is seldom know to exceed him in his morals.

Wor. What proof then can I give you of my truth ?

Am. There is on earth but one.

Wor. And is that in my power ?

Am. It is ; and one that would so thoroughly convince me, I should be apt to rate your heart so high, I possibly might purchase't with a part of mine.

Wor. ' Then, Heav'n, thou art my friend, and ' I am blest ; ' for if 'tis in my power, my will I'm sure will ' reach it.' No matter what the terms may be, when such a recompence is offered. O tell me quickly what

this proof must be? What is it will convince you of my love?

Am. I shall believe you love me as you ought, if from this moment, you forbear to ask whatever is unfit for me to grant——You pause upon it, Sir——I doubt on such hard terms, a woman's heart is scarcely worth the having.

Wor. A heart like yours, on any terms is worth it; 'twas not on that I paused: but I was thinking [*Drawing nearer to her.*] whether some things there may not be, which women cannot grant without a blush, and yet which men may take without offence. [*Taking her hand.*] Your hand I fancy may be of the number: O pardon me, if I commit a rape upon it, [*Kissing it eagerly.*] and thus devour it with my kisses.

Am. O heavens! let me go.

Wor. Never, whilst I have strength to hold you here. [*Forcing her.*] My life, my soul, my goddess——O forgive me!

Am. O whither am I going? Help, Heaven, or I am lost.

Wor. Stand neuter, gods, this once I do invoke you.

Am. Then, save me, Virtue, and the glory's thine.

Wor. Nay, never strive.

Am. I will; and conquer too. My forces rally bravely to my aid, [*Breaking from him.*] and thus I gain the day.

Wor. Then mine as bravely double their attack; [*Seizing her again.*] and thus I wrest it from you. Nay, struggle not; for all's in vain: or death or victory; I am determined.

Am. And so am I. [*Rushing from him.*] Now keep your distance, or we part for ever.

Wor. [*Offering again.*] For Heaven's sake——

Am. [*Going.*] Nay then, farewell.

Wor. [*Kneeling, and holding by her clothes.*] O stay, and see the magic force of love: behold this raging lion at your feet, struck dead with fear, and tame as charms can make him. What must I do to be forgiven by you?

Am. Repent, and never more offend.

Wor.

Wor. Repentance for past crimes, is just and easy ;
 but sin no more's a task too hard for mortals.

Am. Yet those who hope for Heaven, must use their
 best endeavours to perform it.

Wor. Endeavours we may use, but flesh and blood
 are got in t'other scale ; and they are pond'rous
 things.

Am. Whate'er they are, there is a weight in resolu-
 tion sufficient for their balance. The soul, I do con-
 fess, is usually so careless of its charge, so soft, and so
 indulgent to desire, it leaves the reins in the wild hand
 of Nature, who, like a Phaeton, drives the fiery cha-
 riot, and sets the world on flame. Yet still the sove-
 reignty is in the mind, whene'er it pleases to exert its
 force. Perhaps you may not think it worth your
 while, to take such mighty pains for my esteem ; but
 that I leave to you.

You see the price I set upon my heart,

Perhaps 'tis dear : but spite of all you art,

You'll find on cheaper terms, we ne'er shall part.

[Exit.

Wor. Sure there's divinity about her ; and she's dis-
 pens'd some portion on't to me. For what but now was
 the wild flame of love, or (to dissect that spacious term)
 the vile, the gross desires of flesh and blood, is in a mo-
 ment turned to adoration. The coarser appetite of na-
 ture's gone, and 'tis methinks, the food of angels I re-
 quire : how long this influence may last, Heaven
 knows ; but in this moment of my purity, I could on
 her own terms accept her heart. Yes, lovely woman,
 I can accept it. For now 'tis doubly worth my care.
 Your charms are much increased, since thus adorned.
 When truth's extorted from us, then we own the robe
 of virtue is a graceful habit.

Could women but our secret counsels scan,
 Could they but reach the deep reserves of man,
 They'd wear it on, that that of love might last ;
 For when they throw off one, we soon the other cast.
 Their sympathy is such——

The fate of one, the other scarce can fly,
 They live together, and together die.

[Exit.
 Enter

Enter Young Fashion, 'meeting Lory.

' *Y. Fash.* Well, will the doctor come ?

' *Lory.* Sir, I sent a porter to him as you ordered me.
' He found him with a pipe of tobacco and a great tankard of ale, which, he said, he would dispatch while I could tell three, and be here.

' *Y. Fash.* He does not suspect 'twas I that sent for him.

' *Lory.* Not a jot, Sir ; he divines as little for himself, as he does for other folks.

' *Y. Fash.* Will he bring nurse with him ?

' *Lory.* Yes.

' *Y. Fash.* That's well ; where's Coupler ?

' *Lory.* He's half way up the stairs taking breath ; he must play his bellows a little, before he can get to the top.

Enter Coupler.

' *Y. Fash.* O, here he is. Well, old Phthisic, the doctor's coming.

' *Coup.* Would the pox had the doctor—I'm quite out of wind. [*To Lory.*] Set me a chair, firrah. Ah—
[*Sits down.*] [*To Y. Fash.*] Why the plague can't not thou lodge upon the ground-floor ?

' *Y. Fash.* Because I love to lie as near Heaven as I can.

' *Coup.* Pr'ythee, let Heaven alone ; ne'er affect tending that way : thy center's downwards.

' *Y. Fash.* That's impossible. I have too much ill-luck in this world to be damned in the next.

' *Coup.* Thou art out in thy logic. Thy major is true, but thy minor is false ; for thou art the luckiest fellow in the universe.

' *Y. Fash.* Make out that.

' *Coup.* I'll do't : last night the devil ran away with the parson of Fat Goose living.

' *Y. Fash.* If he had run away with the parish too, what's that to me ?

' *Coup.* I'll tell thee what it's to thee. This living is worth five hundred pounds a-year, and the presentation of it is thine, if thou can't prove thyself a lawful husband to Miss Hoyden.

' *Y. Fash.*

' *Y. Fash.* Say'st thou so, my protector! then 'Egad
' I shall have a brace of evidences here presently.

' *Coup.* The nurse and the doctor?

' *Y. Fash.* The same: the devil himself won't have
' interest enough to make them withstand it.

' *Coup.* That we shall see presently.—Here they come.
Enter Nurse and Chaplain; they start back, seeing Young Fashion.

' *Nurse.* Ah goodness, Roger, we are betrayed.

' *Y. Fash.* [*Laying bold on them.*] Nay, nay, ne'er
' flinch for the matter; for I have you safe. Come to
' your trials immediately; I have no time to give you
' copies of your indictment. There sits your judge.—
' [*Both kneeling.*] Pray, Sir, have compassion on us.

' *Nurse.* I hope, Sir, my years will move your pity;
' I am an aged woman.

' *Coup.* That is a moving argument indeed. [*To Bull.*]
' Are not you a rogue of sanctity?

' *Bull.* Sir, with respect to my function, I do wear a
' gown. I hope, Sir, my character will be considered:
' I am Heaven's ambassador.

' *Coup.* Did not you marry this vigorous young fellow
' to a plump young buxom wench?

' *Nurse.* [*To Bull.*] Don't confess, Roger, unless you
' are hard put to it indeed.

' *Coup.* Come, out with't—Now is he chewing the
' cud of his roguery, and grinding a lie between his
' teeth.

' *Bull.* Sir—I cannot positively say—I say, Sir
' —positively I cannot say—

' *Coup.* Come, no equivocation, no Roman turns up-
' on us. Consider thou stand'st upon Protestant ground,
' which will slip from under thee, like a Tyburn cart;
' for in this country, we have always ten hangmen for
' one Jesuit.

' *Bull.* [*To Y. Fash.*] Pray, Sir, then will you but per-
' mit me to speak one word in private with nurse?

' *Y. Fash.* Thou art always for doing something in
' private with nurse.

' *Coup.* But pray let his betters be serv'd before him
' for once. I would do something in private with her
' myself. Lory, take care of this reverend gown-man
' in

‘ in the next room a little. Retire, priest. [*Exit Lory with Bull.*] Now, virgin, I must put the matter home to you a little: do you think it might not be possible to make you speak truth?

‘ *Nurse.* Alas! Sir, I don’t know what you mean by truth.

‘ *Coup.* Nay, ’tis possible thou mayest be a stranger to it.

‘ *Y. Fash.* Come, nurse, you and I were better friends when we saw one another last; and I still believe you are a very good woman in the bottom. I did deceive you and your young lady, ’tis true, but I always designed to make a very good husband to her, and to be a very good friend to you. And ’tis possible in the end, she might have found herself happier, and you richer, than ever my brother will make you.

‘ *Nurse.* Brother! Why is your worship then his Lordship’s brother?

‘ *Y. Fash.* I am; which you should have known, if I durst have staid to have told you; but I was forced to take horse a little in haste, you know.

‘ *Nurse.* You were indeed, Sir. Poor young man, how he was bound to scaure for’t. Now won’t your worship be angry, if I confess the truth to-you? When found you were a cheat (with respect be it spoken) I verily believed Miss had got some pitiful skip-Jack varlet or other to her husband, or I had ne’er let her think of marrying again.

‘ *Coup.* But where was your conscience all this while, woman? Did not that stare you in the face with huge saucer-eyes, and a great horn upon the forehead? Did not you think you should be damned for such a sin? Ha!

‘ *Y. Fash.* Well said, divinity; press that home upon her.

‘ *Nurse.* Why, in good truly, Sir, I had some fearful thoughts on’t, and could never be brought to consent, till Mr. Bull said it was a peckadilla, and he’d secure my soul for a tythe-pig.

‘ *Y. Fash.* There was a rogue for you.

‘ *Coup.* And he shall thrive accordingly: he shall have a good living. Come, honest nurse, I see you have

‘ have butter in your compound ; you can melt. Some
 ‘ compassion you can have of this handsome young fel-
 ‘ low.

‘ *Nurse.* I have indeed, Sir.

‘ *Y. Fash.* ‘ Why then I’ll tell you what you shall do
 ‘ for me.’ You know what a warm living here is fallen ;
 and that it must be in the disposal of him who has the
 disposal of Miss. Now if you and the doctor will agree
 to prove my marriage, I’ll present him to it, upon condi-
 tion he make you his bride.

‘ *Nurse.* Now the blessing of the Lord follow your
 good worship ‘ both by night and by day.’ Let him be
 fetched in by the ears ; I’ll soon bring his nose to the
 grindstone.

‘ *Coup.* [*Afide.*] Well said, old whit-leather. Hey ;
 bring in the prisoner there.

Enter Lory with Bull.

‘ *Coup.* Come, advance, holy man : here’s your duck
 ‘ does not think fit to retire with you into the chancel at
 ‘ this time ; but she has a proposal to make to you in the
 ‘ face of the congregation. Come, nurse, speak for
 ‘ yourself ; you are of age.

‘ *Nurse.* Roger, are not you a wicked man, Roger, to
 ‘ set your strength against a weak woman, and persuade
 ‘ her it was no sin to conceal Miss’s nuptials ? My con-
 ‘ science flies in my face for it, thou priest of Baal ; and
 ‘ I find, by woeful experience, thy absolution is not worth
 ‘ an old cassock : therefore I am resolved to confess the
 ‘ truth to the whole world, though I die a beggar for it.
 ‘ But his worship overflows with his mercy, and his boun-
 ‘ ty : he is not only pleased to forgive us our sins, but
 ‘ designs thou sha’t squat thee down in Fat-goose living
 ‘ and which is more than all, has prevailed with me to
 ‘ become the wife of thy bosom.’

‘ *Young F.* All this I intend for you, doctor : what you
 are to do for me, I need not tell ye.

‘ *Bull.* Your worship’s goodness is unspeakable : ‘ yet
 ‘ there is one thing seems a point of conscience ; and
 ‘ conscience is a tender babe. If I should bind myself,
 ‘ for the sake of this living, to marry nurse, and main-
 ‘ tain her afterwards, I doubt it might be looked on as a
 ‘ kind of simony.’

Coup.

Coup. ' [*Rising up.*] If it were sacrilege, the living's ' worth it: therefore, ' no more words, good doctor; but with the [*Giving Nurse to him.*] Parish—here—take the parsonage-house. 'Tis true, 'tis a little out of repair; some dilapidations there are to be made good; the windows are broke, the wainscot is warped, the cielings are peeled, and the walls are cracked; but a little glazing, painting, whitewash, and plaister, will make it last thy time.

Bull. Well, Sir, if it must be so, ' I shan't contend: ' What Providence orders, ' I submit ' to.'

Nurse. And so do I, with all humility.

Coup. Why, that now was spoke like good people: Come, ' my turtle-doves,' let us go help this poor pigeon to his wandering mate again; and after institution and induction, you shall go a cooing together. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Miss and Nurse.

Miss. But is it sure and certain; say you, he's my Lord's own brother?

Nurse. As sure, as he's your lawful husband.

Miss. I'cad, if I had known that in time, I don't know but I might have kept him: for, between you and I, nurse, he'd have made a husband worth two of this I have. But which do you think you should fancy most, nurse?

Nurse. Why, truly, in my poor fancy, Madam, your first husband is the prettier gentleman.

Miss. I don't like my Lord's shapes, nurse.

Nurse. Why in good truly, as a body may say, he is but a flum.

Miss. What do you think now he puts me in mind of? Don't you remember a long, loose, shambling sort of a horse my father called Washy?

Nurse. As like as two twin-brothers.

Miss. I'cod, I have thought so a hundred times; faith. I'm tired of him.

Nurse. Indeed, Madam, I think you had e'en as good stand to your first bargain.

Miss. O but, nurse, we han't considered the main thing yet. If I leave my lord, I must leave my lady too; and when I rattle about in the streets in my coach, they'll only say, there goes Mistress—Mistress—

Mistress

Mistress what? What's this man's name, I have married, nurse?

Nurse. 'Squire Fashion.

Miss. 'Squire Fashion is it?—Well, 'squire, that's better than nothing. Do you think one could not get him made a knight, nurse?

Nurse. I don't know but one might, Madam, when the king's in a good humour.

Miss. I'cod, that would do rarely. For then he'd be as good a man as my father, you know.

Nurse. By'r lady, and that's as good as the best of 'em.

Miss. So 'tis, faith; for then I shall be my lady, and your ladyship at every word, that's all I have to care for. Ha, nurse, but hark you me, one thing more, and then I have done. I'm afraid, if I change my husband again, I shan't have so much money to throw about, nurse.

Nurse. Oh, enough's as good as a feast: 'besides, Madam, one don't know, but as much may fall to your share with the younger brother, as with the elder.' For tho' these lords have a power of wealth indeed; yet as I have heard say, they give it all to their sluts and their trulls, who joggle it about in their coaches, with a murrain to 'em, whilst poor Madam sits fighting and wishing, and knotting and crying, and has not a spare half-crown, to buy her a Practice of Piety.

Miss. O, but for that, don't deceive yourself, nurse, for this I must [*Snapping her fingers.*] say for my Lord, and a——for him; he's as free as an open house at Christmas. For this very morning he told me, I should have two hundred a-year to buy pins. Now, nurse, if he gives me two hundred a-year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy fine petticoats?

Nurse. Ah, my dearest, he deceives thee foully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains. These Londoners have got a gibberidge with 'em, would confound a gipsy. That which they call pin-money, is to buy their wives every thing in the verfal world, down to their very shoe ties. 'Nay, I have heard folks say, that some ladies, if they will have gallants, as they call 'em, are forced to find them out of their pin-money too.'

Miss.

Miss. Has he served me so, say ye?—Then I'll be his wife no longer, that's fixt. Look, here he comes, with all the fine folks at's heels. I'cod, nurse, these London ladies will laugh till they crack again, to see me slip my collar, and run away from my husband. But, d'ye hear, pray take care of one thing: when the business comes to break out, be sure you get between me and my father, for you know his tricks; he'll knock me down.

Nurse. I'll mind him, ne'er fear, Madam.

Enter Lord Foppington, Loveless, Worthy, Amanda, and Berinthia.

Lord Fop. Ladies and gentlemen, you are all welcome. [*To Lov.*] Loveless—that's my wife; pr'ythee do me the favour to salute her: and do'st hear, [*Aside to him.*] if thou hast a mind to try thy fortune, to be revenged of me, I won't take it ill, stop my vitals.

Lov. You need not fear, Sir, I'm too fond of my own wife, to have the least inclination for yours.

[*All salute Miss.*]

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] I'd give a thousand pound he would make love to her, that he may see she has sense enough to prefer me to him, tho' his own wife has not. [*Viewing him.*] 'He's a very beastly fellow, in my opinion.'

Miss. [*Aside.*] What a power of fine men there are in this London. He that kissed me first, is a goodly gentleman, I promise you. Sure those wives have a rare time on't, that live here always.

Enter Sir Tunbelly, with Musicians, Dancers, &c.

Sir Tun. Come, come in, good people, come in; come, tune your fiddles, tune your fiddles. [*To the bandboys.*] Bag-pipes, make ready there. Come, strike up.

[*Sings.*]

For this is Hoyden's wedding day;
And therefore we keep holy-day,
And come to be merry.

Ha! there's my wench, i'faith: touch and take, I'll warrant her; she'll breed like a tame rabbit.

Miss. [*Aside.*] I'cod, I think my father's gotten drunk before supper.

Sir Tun. [*To Lov. and Wor.*] Gentlemen, you are welcome. [*Saluting Aman. and Ber.*] Ladies, by your leave. Ha——they bill like turtles: udfookers, they set my old blood a-fire; I shall cuckold somebody before morning.

Lord Fop. [*To Sir Tun.*] Sir, you being master of the entertainment; will you desire the company to sit?

Sir Tun. Oons, Sir——I'm the happiest man on this side the Ganges.

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] This is a mighty unaccountable old fellow. [*To Sir Tun.*] I said, Sir, it would be convenient to ask the company to sit.

Sir Tun. Sit——'with all my heart: come, take your places, ladies, take your places, gentlemen:' come, 'sit down, sit down;' a pox of ceremony, 'take your places.'

[*They sit, and the Mask begins.*]

' DIALOGUE *between Cupid and Hymen.*

' CUPID.

I.

' Thou bane to my empire, thou spring of contest,
' Thou source of all discord, thou period to rest;
' Instruct me what wretches in bondage can see,
' That the aim of their life is still pointed to thee.

' HYMEN.

II.

' Instruct me, thou little impertinent god,
' From whence all thy subjects have taken the mode
' To grow fond of a change, to whatever it be,
' And I'll tell thee why those would be bound, who are free.

' CHORUS.

' For change, we're for change, to whatever it be,
' We are neither contented with freedom, nor thee.
' 'Constancy's an empty sound,
' Heaven, and earth, and all go round,
' All the works of nature move;
' And the joys of life and love
' Are in variety.

I

' CUPID.

CURIO.

III.

- ‘ Were love the reward of a pains-taking life,
- ‘ Had a husband the art to be fond of his wife,
- ‘ Were virtue so plenty, a wife could afford,
- ‘ These very hard times, to be true to her lord,
- ‘ Some specious account might be given of those,
- ‘ Who are ty’d by the tail, to be led by the nose.

IV.

- ‘ But since ’tis the fate of a man and his wife,
- ‘ To consume all their days in contention and strife :
Since whatever the bounty of Heaven may create her,
- ‘ He’s morally sure he shall heartily hate her.
- ‘ I think ’twere much wiser to ramble at large,
- ‘ And the volleys of love on the head to discharge.

HYMEN.

V.

- ‘ Some colour of reason thy counsel might bear,
- ‘ Could a man have no more than his wife to his share :
- ‘ Or were I a monarch so cruelly just,
- ‘ To oblige a poor wife to be true to her trust ;
- ‘ But I have not pretended, for many years past,
- ‘ By marrying of people, to make ’em grow chaste.

VI.

- ‘ I therefore advise thee to let me go on,
- ‘ Thou’lt find I’m the strength and support of thy
throne ;
- ‘ For hadst thou but eyes, thou wouldst quickly perceive
it,
- ‘ How smoothly the dart
- ‘ Slips into the heart
- ‘ Of a woman that’s wed,
- ‘ Whilst the shivering maid
- ‘ Stands trembling, and wishing, but dare not receive it.

CHORUS.

- ‘ For change, &c.

The mask ended, enter Young Fashion, Coupler, and Bull.

Sir Tun. So, 'very fine, very fine; i'faith, this is 'something like a wedding.' Now, if supper were but ready, I'd say a short grace; and if I had such a bedfellow as Hoyden to-night—I'd say as short prayers—[*Seeing Y. Fash.*] How now, what have we got here? A ghost! Nay, it must be so; for his flesh and blood could never have dared to appear before me—[*To him.*] Ah, rogue!

Lord Fop. Stap my vitals, Tam again!

Sir Tun. My Lord, will you cut his throat, or shall I?

Lord Fop. Thou art the impudentest fellow that nature has yet spawned into the world, strike me speechless.

Y. Fash. Why, you know my modesty would have starved me; I sent it a begging to you, and you would not give it a groat.

Lord Fop. And dost thou expect, by an excess of assurance, to extort a maintenance from me?

Y. Fash. [*Taking Miss by the hand.*] I do intend to extort your mistress from you, and that I hope will prove one.

Lord Fop. I ever thought Newgate or Bedlam would be his fortune, and now his fate's decided. Pr'ythee, Loveless, dost know of ever a mad doctor hard by?

Y. Fash. There's one at your elbow will cure you presently.—[*To Bull.*] Pr'ythee, doctor, take him in hand quickly.

Lord Fop. Shall I beg the favour of you, Sir, to pull your fingers out of my wife's hand?

Y. Fash. His wife? Look you there. Now I hope you are all satisfied he's mad.

Lord Fop. Now is it impassible for me to penetrate what species of folly it is thou art driving at.

Sir Tun. Here, here, here, let me beat out his brains, and that will decide all.

Lord Fop. No, pray, Sir, hold; we'll destroy him presently, according to law.

Y. Fash. [*To Bull.*] Nay, then, advance, Doctor—Come, you are a man of conscience; answer boldly to the questions I shall ask. Did not you marry me to this young lady, before ever that gentleman there saw her face?

Bull. Since the truth must out, I did.

T. Fash. Nurse, sweet nurse, were not you a witness to it?

Nurse. Since my conscience bids me speak—I was.

T. Fash. [*To Miss.*] Madam, am not I your lawful husband?

Miss. Truly, I can't tell; but you married me first.

T. Fash. Now, I hope you are all satisfied.

Sir Tun. [*Offering to strike him, is held by Lov. and Wor.*] Oons and thunder, you lie!

Lord Fop. Pray, Sir, be calm—the battle is in disorder; but requires more conduct than courage to rally our forces. Pray, Doctor, one word with you. [*To Bull. aside.*] Look you, Sir, 'tho' I will nat presume to calculate your notions of damnation, fram the description you give us of hell; yet, since there is a passibility you may have a pitchfork thrust in your backside, me-thinks it should not be worth your while to risque your soul in the next world, for the sake of a beggarly yaunger brather, who is nat able to make your body happy in this.

Bull. Alas, my Lord, I have no worldly ends! I speak the truth, Heaven knows——

Lord Fop. Nay, pr'ythee, never engage Heaven in the matter; far, by all I can see, 'tis like to prove a 'business far the devil.'

T. Fash. Come, pray, Sir, all above-board; no corrupting of evidences, if you please; this young lady is my lawful wife, and I'll justify it in all the courts in England. So, your Lordship (who had always a passion for variety) may go seek a new mistress if you think fit.

Lord Fop. I am struck dumb with his impudence, and cannot positively tell whether ever I shall speak again, or nat.

Sir Tun. Then let me come and examine the business a little; I'll jerk the truth out of them presently. Here, give me my dog-whip.

T. Fash. Look you, old gentleman, 'tis in vain to make a noise; if you grow mutinous, I have some friends within call, have swords by their sides above four foot long; therefore, be calm, hear the evidence patiently, and when the jury have given their verdict, pass sentence according

to law. Here's honest Coupler shall be foreman, and ask as many questions as he pleases.

Coup. All I have to ask is, whether the nurse persists in her evidence? The parson, I dare swear, will never flinch from his.

Nurse. [*To Sir Tun. kneeling.*] I hope in heaven your worship will pardon me: I have served you long and faithfully; but in this thing I was over-reached. Your worship, however, was deceived as well as I; and if the wedding-dinner had been ready, you had put Madam to bed with him with your own hands.

Sir Tun. But how durst you do this, without acquainting of me.

Nurse. Alas! if your worship had seen how the poor thing begged, and prayed, and clung, and twined about me, like ivy to an old wall, you would say, I, who had suckled it, and swaddled it, and nursed it both wet and dry, must have had a heart of adamant to refuse it.

Sir Tun. Very well.

Y. Fash. Foreman, I expect your verdict.

Coup. Ladies and gentlemen, what's your opinions?

All. A clear case, a clear case.

Coup. Then, my young folks, I wish you joy.

Sir Tun. [*To Y. Fash.*] Come hither, stripling—If it be true, then, that thou hast married my daughter, pr'ythee, tell me who thou art.

Y. Fash. Sir, the best of my condition is, I am your son-in-law; and the worst of it is, I am brother to that noble Peer there.

Sir Tun. Art thou brother to that noble Peer?—Why then, that noble Peer, and thee, and thy wife, and the nurse, and the priest—may all go and be damn'd together.

[*Exit Sir Tun.*]

Lord Fop. [*Aside.*] Naw, for my part, I think the wisest thing a man can do, with an aking heart, is to put on a serene countenance; for a philosophical air is the most becoming thing in the world to the face of a person of quality. I will therefore bear my disgrace like a great man, and let the people see I am above an affront.—[*To Y. Fash.*] Dear Tam, since things are thus fallen out, pr'ythee, give me leave to wish thee jay; I do it *de bon cœur*,

cœur, strike me dumb. You have married a woman, beautiful in her person, charming in her airs, prudent in her conduct, constant in her inclinations, and of a nice morality, split my windpipe.

T. Fash. Your Lordship may keep up your spirits with your grimace, if you please; I shall support mine with this lady, and two thousand pounds a year.—[*Taking Miss.*] Come Madam:

We once again, you see, are man and wife;
And now, perhaps, the bargain's struck for life:
If I mistake, and we should part again,
At least, you see you may have choice of men:
Nay, should the war at length such havock make,
That lovers should grow scarce, yet for your sake,
Kind Heaven always will preserve a beau—

[*Pointing to Lord Fop*] You'll find his Lordship ready
to come to.

Lord Fop. Her Ladyship shall stop my vitals if I do.

[*Exeunt.*]

END of the FIFTH ACT.



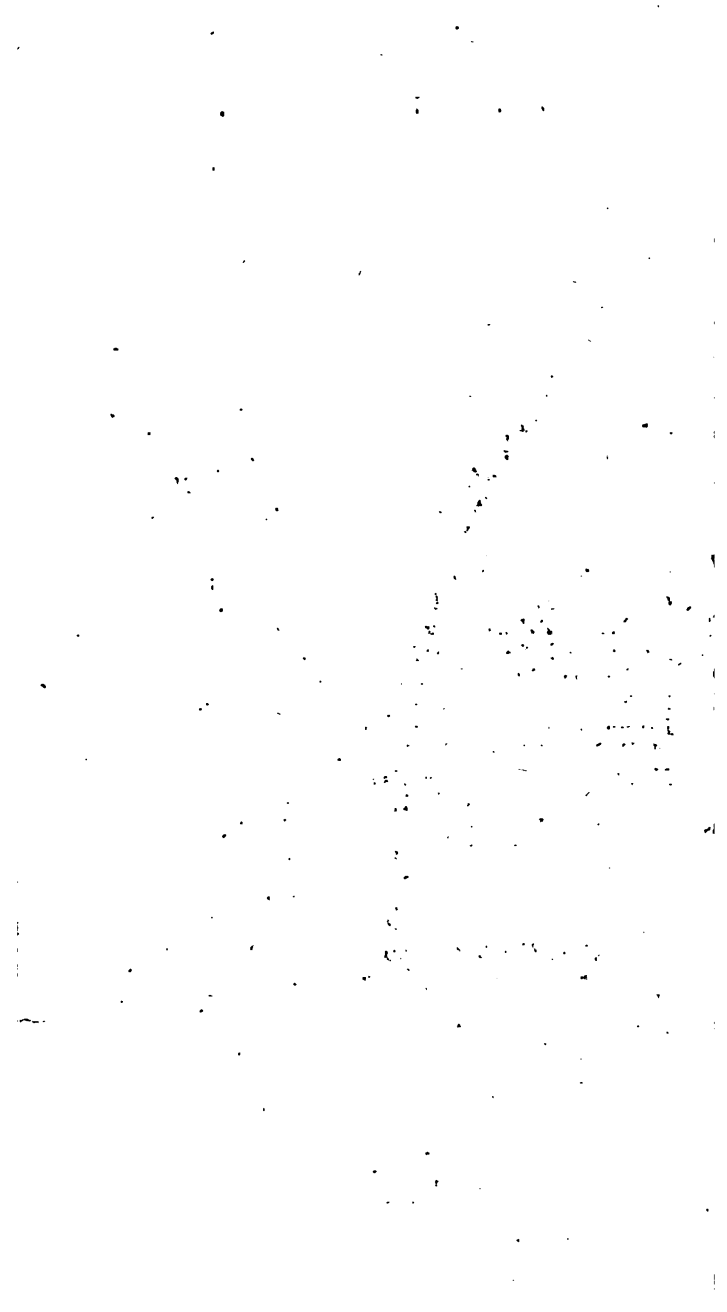
E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by LORD FOPPINGTON.

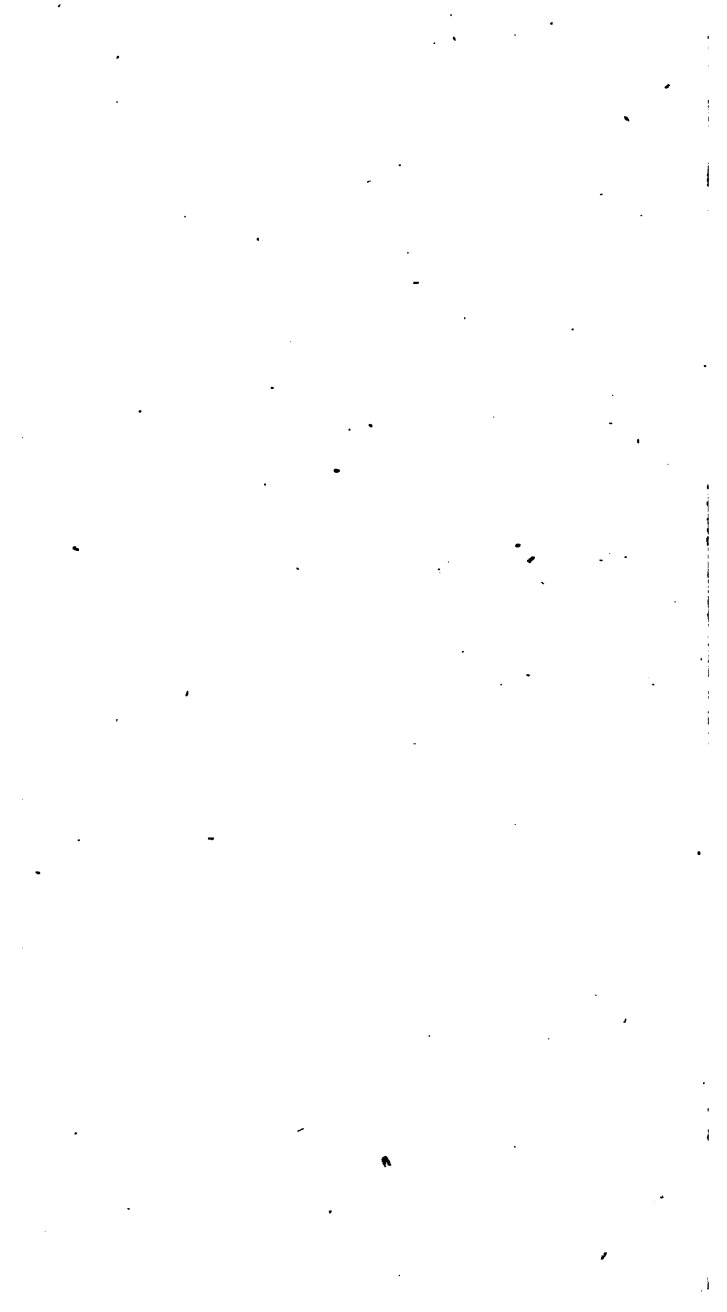
Gentlemen and Ladies,

THESE people have regal'd you here to-day
(In my opinion) with a saucy play;
In which the author does presume to show,
That coxcomb, ab origine—was beau.
Truly, I think the thing of so much weight,
That if some sharp chastisement ben't his fate,
Gad's curse, it may, in time, destroy the state.
I hold no one its friend, I must confess,
Who would discauntenance you men of dress.
Far, give me leave t'observe, good cloaths are things
Have ever been of great support to kings.
All treasons come from slovens; it is nat
Within the reach of gentle beaux to plat;
They have no gall, no spleen, no teeth, no stings;
Of all Gad's creatures the most harmless things.
Thro' all recard, no prince was ever slain
By one who had a feather in his brain.
They're men of too refin'd an education,
To squabble with a court—for a vile dirty nation.
I'm very positive you never saw
A th'ro' republican a finish'd beau.
Nor, truly, shall you very often see
A Jacobite much better dress'd than he.
In short, thro' all the courts that I have been in,
Your men of mischief—still are in foul linen.
Did ever yet one dance the Tyburn jig,
With a free air, or a well powder'd wig?
Did ever highwayman yet bid you stand,
With a sweet bawdy snuff-box in his hand?
Or do you ever find they ask your purse,
As men of breeding do?—Ladies, Gad's curse,
This author is a dag, and 'tis not fit
You should allow him ev'n one grain of wit;
To which, that his pretence may ne'er be nam'd,
My humble motion is—he may be damn'd.













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V. 11

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